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A HISTORY OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

A HISTORY OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

WITH
A CHAPTER ON
THE EARLY INSTITUTIONS OF ART
IN NEW YORK

BY
WINIFRED E. HOWE

NEW YORK
M C M X I I

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THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

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FOREWORD

BY

ROBERT W. DE FOREST

THE idea of writing this history originated with Mr. Henry W. Kent, who since 1905 has been assistant secretary of the museum. Under his direction and with his collaboration the volume has been prepared by Miss Winifred E. Howe. Its authors had no personal knowledge of the museum prior to their official connection with it. The book, therefore, has been compiled largely from the minutes of meetings and other filed papers. The manuscript has been submitted for criticism to Mr. Joseph H. Choate, whose suggestions have all been adopted; I too have had an opportunity for revision, of which I have sparingly availed myself. Mr. Choate and I, however, have not sought to change its form, but have confined ourselves to a few corrections and amplifications. It is hoped that the publication of these pages will elicit information of a more personal character than that contained in the official documents — information relating particularly to the earlier history of the museum — which can be included in a later edition. Such information would be invaluable to the historian of the future, who, writing of an earlier generation, could without impropriety dwell upon matters forbidden to the writer of contemporary history.

The attempt to collect and present in readable form all

the data of public interest concerning the New York Metropolitan Museum has been made largely with the hope that its history would encourage the establishment of such institutions in other cities. Many of our large cities now offer to museums greater possibilities of success and usefulness than existed in New York when the Metropolitan was founded forty-two years ago, and its development from small beginnings, but under a broad and comprehensive plan, should stimulate like undertakings elsewhere. A small art museum on educational lines is a necessary adjunct to all public libraries except where proximity to a large art center admits of co-ordination between library and museum. It is an encouraging sign that the number of these small museums is constantly increasing. If this history be suggestive and stimulating to public-spirited citizens interested in founding museums elsewhere, this book will have served a useful purpose.

My own official connection with the museum dates back no further than 1883, but through my father-in-law, John Taylor Johnston, I was from the start so closely associated with it, both in interest and action, that my memory covers in some degree the whole period of its existence.

Looking back over this period as I read the proof of this book, whose pages recall so much that I once knew, and tell me so much that I now know for the first time, a number of thoughts press upon me for expression which are rather in the nature of an "afterword" than a "foreword." It is plain that the idea of a museum in New York had its conception far back in the beginning of the last century. Had not the ground been prepared — enriched, it may be — by the failure of earlier efforts, the growth of our museum would not have been so rapid. It is plain, too, that the need in response to which it was founded, was felt in other parts of this country besides New York City, for the art museums

which to-day hold the foremost rank were all established at about the same time.

It is fortunate that the movement to establish the museum was from the start under the control of a large and representative body of men, and that the raising of money took the form of a general subscription. Too often, in the early life of such an institution, has the great prominence and generosity of a single person handicapped its future growth. While the initiative came from the Art Committee of the Union League Club, the officers of the meeting called on November 23, 1869, to consider the founding of the museum represented the intellectual and artistic leadership of New York. Among them were William Cullen Bryant, President of the Century Association; Daniel Huntington, President of the National Academy of Design; Richard M. Hunt, President of the New York Chapter of the Institute of Architects; Dr. Barnard, President of Columbia College; and Dr. Henry W. Bellows, foremost among New York's public-spirited clergymen. Present on behalf of the city government, at this first meeting, were Andrew H. Green, Comptroller of Central Park, and Henry G. Stebbins, President of the Central Park Commission — their attendance foreshadowing, at the outset, the close relationship of the Museum with the City which was later established and which has been so potent a factor in its development.[1] The Committee of Fifty, into whose hands the project was committed by this meeting, was even more representative than the earlier body, adding to the leaders in literature and art the foremost business men of the period.

Fortunate, and remarkable, too, was the broad scope of museum activities conceived by these early committees. It would have been quite in the spirit of the time to make the new institution simply a gallery of painting and sculpture. Not so. While the memorable address of William Cullen

Bryant at this first meeting* naturally emphasized, as became the poet, the aesthetic enjoyment of the fine arts, the Committee set out to found a museum that should contain complete collections of objects illustrative of the history of "all the arts, whether industrial, educational, or recreative, which can give value to such an institution."

Thus we find that the present trustees, in laying emphasis upon industrial art and education, more or less in the belief that they are initiating new departures, are but returning to the basic principles upon which the museum was founded.

And what was the sum of money these founders placed before themselves as the goal of their ambition with which to establish the new institution, started by so general a movement and so all-embracing in its aims? It is pathetic to recall that it was only $250,000, a sum $100,000 less than the present annual administrative expenses of the institution which they founded a little more than forty years ago! And it is still more pathetic to recall that after more than a year's effort they had raised less than half the desired sum — only $106,000! Such financially was the modest beginning of the great Metropolitan Museum which now, besides its extensive building and its priceless collections, has an endowment for purchase funds of over $10,000,000! Does this not encourage like effort elsewhere?

But what the founders lacked in money they made up in wisdom and zeal.

The idea of locating an art museum in Central Park originated with Andrew H. Green, the father of that great park, and it must be a satisfaction to those who worked with him and who cherish his memory to know that the Museum now stands upon the spot he designated for such a purpose. But the actual housing of the Museum there, in a building erected and owned by the city, and the lease which defines the rela-

*Printed at page 106.

tion between the museum and the city in its occupation of the building, bear testimony to the wisdom of its founders and the far-sighted policy of those public officials who at the time of its organization represented our city. It is curious and interesting to recall that the public officials to adopt this policy in 1871 were none other than William M. Tweed and Peter B. Sweeny.

Included in the text is material which gives some notion of the personal service rendered by those early Trustees — notably the letters of Mr. Johnston to Mr. Blodgett, relating to the first exhibition, and an account of the labors of William C. Prime and William L. Andrews, who unpacked with their own hands the collections when they were moved from the Douglas Mansion to their new home in Central Park.

The history of the museum divides itself naturally into three periods. The first, during which it had largely to rely upon voluntary service, may be said to have ended in 1879 with the election as first salaried director of General di Cesnola. The second period, increasingly marked by the General's dominating personality, came to a close at his death in 1904. The third period began with the election as President of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan. During these later years the Museum, with larger resources, and we hope with no less wisdom than in the earlier days has been better able to realize the broad aims of its founders. The earlier chapters of this book treat of events sufficiently remote to be the proper subject of history; they can be viewed in historic perspective. But the last chapter, treating as it does of recent events, can be deemed only a contribution toward history still to be written.

The friends of the Museum who have made it what it is, and there are many outside the ranks of its trustees and even of its membership, as well as the descendants of those who labored and have entered into their rest, will, I know, join

me in thanking Mr. Kent and Miss Howe for this book, which will quicken memories of the past and afford inspiration for the future.

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INTRODUCTION

EARLY INSTITUTIONS OF ART IN NEW YORK 1787-1864

AMERICAN MUSEUM,

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE TAMMANY SOCIETY, OR COLUMBIAN ORDER.

THE Tammany Society has established a Museum for the purpose of collecting and preserving every thing relating to the history of America, likewise, every American production of nature or art; for which purpose part of the funds of the society are appropriated.

The success of this institution, however, must, in a great measure, depend on the voluntary contributions of a generous public; and the present collection has chiefly arisen from this source. Although quite in its infancy, the Museum already contains many articles in the historical and natural lines, highly deserving the notice of the curious.

As almost every individual possesses some article which in itself is of little value, but in a collective view, becomes of real importance—the patrons of this institution solicit the attention of their fellow-citizens to the Museum; and request their aid towards forming a collection which promises fair to become an object of public utility. The articles and names of the generous donors, are carefully registered in a book kept for the purpose, the contents of which will be published at some future season.

Every thing, and from whatever hand, will be acceptable; for although the funds of the society are confined to American productions, the doors of the Museum are, nevertheless, open to voluntary contributions from every quarter.

The corporation of this city, ever disposed to encourage patriotic undertakings, and favourably impressed with the importance of the present, has generously granted a room in the City-Hall, on a range with the Library, for the use of the Museum, which is at present opened every Tuesday and Friday afternoons, for the gratification of public curiosity.

Any article sent there on those days, or to Mr. JOHN PINTARD, No. 57, King-Street, will be thankfully accepted, and due care taken of them.

LAWS *and* REGULATIONS *of the* AMERICAN MUSEUM, *belonging to the* TAMMANY SOCIETY *or* COLUMBIAN ORDER.

I. *Of the election of Officers.*

THE Trustees of the American Museum, as by law established, shall, on the first stated meeting after their election, annually choose from out of their number, a Chairman, a Treasurer, and a Secretary.

II. *Of the Chairman.*

The Chairman is to preside at all meetings; to preserve order, to regulate the debates, and to state and put questions, agreeable to the sense and intention of the Trustees. In the absence of the Chairman, his place shall be supplied by one of the Trustees, chosen *pro hac vice*.

III. *Of the Treasurer.*

The Treasurer shall receive all monies that may become due to the Museum, and shall pay the same, by an order from the Chairman, which shall be his voucher. The Treasurer shall keep a regular account of all monies received and paid by him, as aforesaid; and once every year, or oftener if required by the Trustees, he shall render an account to them of the same in his hands, and the disbursements made by their order, and shall deliver up to his successor, the books and all papers belonging to them, together with the balance of cash in his hands.

IV. *Of the Secretary.*

The Secretary shall take the minutes, and read all letters and papers that may be communicated to the Trustees. He shall enter into a book, to be provided for the purpose, an account of all donations made to the Museum, together with the names of the donors. He shall take charge of, and preserve, all books, pamphlets, and works presented to the Museum, or purchased by it;

All curiosities, whether of nature or art, presented or purchased, and shall class and arrange them in their proper order.

V. *Of the meetings of the Trustees.*

The ordinary meetings of the Trustees shall be on the second and fourth Fridays of every month, from October to May, both inclusive, at six o'clock in the evening; on the fourth Friday of each of the other four months, at seven o'clock. No meeting shall be continued after ten o'clock. Five Trustees shall constitute a quorum.

VI. *Of the distribution of Money, and making new Laws.*

No part of the funds shall be disposed of but by a regular motion, seconded and agreed to by a majority of the Trustees present. And all orders for payment shall be signed by the Chairman. No new law shall be made, until the same shall have been proposed at one meeting, and agreed to by a majority of Trustees (forming a quorum) present at a subsequent meeting.

VII. *Of a Keeper.*

The Trustees shall elect a Keeper of the Museum, whose duty shall be to summon all meetings called by the Chairman, to attend the same, and perform such ancillary offices as may be required. He shall receive all persons made to the society, and dispose them in the Museum, giving an account thereof to the Secretary. He shall admit all members into the Museum, at such times as shall be appointed for that purpose, and shall take care that no visitor receives or injures any of the articles belonging to the Museum. For all which services, he shall be entitled to such compensation as the Trustees shall see fit to grant.

VIII. *Of access to, and use of the Museum.*

The institution of the Tammany Society or Columbian Order, in establishing an *American Museum*, being for the sole purpose of collecting and preserving whatever may relate to the history of our country, and serve to perpetuate the same, to all American curiosities of nature or art—In order to answer this end, it is evident that every article presented to or purchased by the society, ought to be carefully deposited in the Museum, and never be allowed to be taken out of the same, least it should be mislaid, and perhaps irrecoverably lost. Nevertheless, in order to render this Museum serviceable, to the great interests of society, every member of the Tammany Society shall have free access thereto, through means of the Keeper, and shall be permitted to examine all the natural or artificial curiosities, and read all books, pamphlets and papers, and take extracts therefrom, as far as may suit his purpose, but shall not be allowed to take away any thing whatever out of the Museum, on any pretext whatever.

The Museum shall also be accessible to any other person, not a member of the society, but who shall be introduced by a member, who shall be alike indulged and alike subject to the same regulations as the members of the society.

The following are the Trustees for the present year:

WILLIAM PITT SMITH, Chairman.
JAMES TYLEE,
JOHN R. B. RODGERS,
JACOB MORTON,
EFFINGHAM EMBREE,
WILLIAM W. GILBERT, Treasurer.
JOHN PINTARD, Secretary.
GARDNER BAKER, Keeper, No. 13, Maiden-Lane,
who is authorized to collect donations.

New-York, June 1, 1791.

PRINTED BY THOMAS AND JAMES SWORDS, AT THEIR PRINTING-OFFICE, No. 27, WILLIAM-STREET.

BROADSIDE ISSUED BY THE
TAMMANY SOCIETY, JUNE 1, 1791

INTRODUCTION

ANY real understanding of the circumstances included in the inception and growth of an institution such as The Metropolitan Museum of Art must come from a knowledge of a long list of events antedating its actual incorporation. To record the efforts of earlier generations toward the establishment of permanent institutions of art in New York City is also but simple justice, for undoubtedly upon their failures as well as upon their successes have been builded the achievements of our day.

The only museum on the island of Manhattan of which there is any record before 1800 was conducted by the Tammany Society, "a fraternity of patriots," established before April 30, 1787,[1] "solemnly consecrated to the independence, the popular liberty, and the federal union of the Country." According to a contemporary record,[2] this society took as its objects "the smile of charity, the chain of friendship, and the flame of liberty." In 1790, the followers of Saint Tammany, largely through the initiative of John Pintard, their first Sagamore, a public-spirited man who stood sponsor for many a worthy undertaking of his day, established a

[1] The New York Daily Advertiser of this date contains a notice for the "Members of Saint Tammany Society in the City of New York" to meet at their wigwam, 49 Cortlandt Street, on May 1st.

[2] New York Directory and Register, 1795, p. 312.

museum "for the purpose of collecting and preserving everything relating to the history of America, likewise, every American production of nature or art,"[1] surely a fairly large undertaking for a young society. Greater still is the range of objects which the Trustees announced themselves willing to receive as gifts, "Everything, and from whatever clime, will be acceptable."[2] The venerable Dr. John W. Francis in his delightful Old New York[3] gives a somewhat detailed account of the Indian relics in this Tammany Museum, mentioning wampum beads, tomahawks, belts, earthen jars, and pots, with other antiquities; together with all that could be found of Indian literature in war songs, hieroglyphic writings on stone, bark, and skins, etc. On May 21, 1791, the museum was thrown open to the public and its by-laws and regulations published.[4] Tuesday and Friday afternoons were the hours set "for the gratification of public curiosity."

At this time our first museum was housed in a room allotted to the Tammany Society in the old City Hall, on Wall Street, where the sub-treasury now stands. Outgrowing these quarters, it found a new home in 1794 in a brick building erected between 1752 and 1754 in the middle of Broad Street between Water and Front Streets,[5] and known from its original use as the "Exchange." The lower part was then used for a market. As the upper part had excellent light on all sides,[6] it was a suitable place for a museum.

[1] Broadside issued June 1, 1791.

[2] Broadside issued June 1, 1791.

[3] J. W. Francis, Old New York, p. 124.

[4] See N. Y. Daily Advertiser, May 21, 1791, and Broadside issued June 1, 1791.

[5] Rufus Rockwell Wilson, New York Old and New, Vol. 1, p. 124.

[6] The "long room" on the second floor was (at one time) occupied as a military school and occasionally for dancing assemblies. (The building) was torn down about the beginning of the present century. Valentine's Manual, 1862.

Interest in art among the members of the Tammany Society speedily waned; only one man, Gardiner Baker, the generous and enthusiastic custodian of the museum, kept his early zeal for the institution. A resolution passed June 25, 1795, recognized his "extraordinary exertions," and transferred the museum to him, the society relinquishing all its right thereto, provided that the members of the

THE ROYAL EXCHANGE
FROM AN UNPUBLISHED WATER-COLOR DRAWING IN THE POSSESSION OF WILLIAM LORING ANDREWS

society with their families should always have free admittance to the Museum, which should be kept "one and indivisible" in some convenient place within the city of New York and always be known as the Tammany Museum.

Mr. Baker continued to add to its attractions, among his accessions being a full-length portrait of General Washington by Stuart, one of four painted by him. Soon afterward, however, this first museum curator, then but a young man, died of yellow fever while in Boston exhibiting this

picture. In the scattering of his possessions all trace of the Stuart seems to have been lost. After Mr. Baker's death the Museum was sold to W. J. Waldron, and passed through several hands. In course of time part of the contents came into the possession of John Scudder[1] in his American Museum,[2] which later became a part of Phineas T. Barnum's museum of wonders.

Beginning with the nineteenth century, there were six important institutions of art in New York — or more strictly, Manhattan — established earlier than The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Of these six organizations one half long ago ceased to exist, but even so they played a part by no means negligible in the history of art in the city. In general they lacked support, either the support of their own membership, or that of an art-loving community, or again that of an enlightened legislature, alive to its opportunity of fostering such educational institutions. A letter written in 1823 by the poet James G. Percival may stand as evidence of the lack of an appreciative public. It reads, "Morse's picture of Congress Hall[3] has cost him $110 to exhibit in New York. Tell it not in Gath! He labored at it eighteen months and spent many hundred dollars in its execution, and now he has to pay the public for looking at it."[4] Even ten years later Mr. Morse wrote to James Fenimore Cooper, "There is a great deal to dishearten in the state of feeling, or rather state of no feeling, on the arts in this city. The only way I can

[1] See page 75.

[2] The name American Museum was also used by the Tammany Society, for the Broadside of June 1, 1791, is headed American Museum, under the Patronage of the Tammany Society or Columbian Order.

[3] This same picture sold some years later for $1,000, and by that sale our Representatives took up their residence in England. They later returned to America, for the picture became the property of Daniel Huntington and has now been purchased by the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington.

[4] Henry T. Tuckerman, Book of the Artists, p. 168.

keep up my spirits is by resolutely resisting all disposition to repine, and by fighting perseveringly against all the obstacles that hinder the progress of art. I have been told several times since my return that I was born 100 years too soon for the arts in our country." To show how the lawmakers at Albany felt, one fact may be cited. In the year 1810 a bill for endowing the New York Historical Society and killing the wolves and panthers was rejected in the State Legislature, and the Society was granted "the glorious privilege of being independent." As George Brown Goode, who as Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution in charge of the U. S. National Museum, made an exhaustive study of museum-history, pointed out, "In the early days of the republic, the establishment of such institutions by city, state, or federal government would not have been considered a legitimate act."[1] Of the three organizations still in existence, each one has come through an early period of financial stress, varying in intensity with the institution, but felt by all, and is now in a secure position of recognized influence and helpfulness.

The six institutions referred to will be discussed in chronological order.

1. THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS

1802–1841

To Chancellor Robert R. Livingston, ambassador to France at that time, is due the honor of originating this first society for the encouragement of the fine arts in the United States, which was formed by subscription in 1802, the immediate

[1] A Memorial of George Brown Goode, together with a Selection of his Papers, Washington, 1901, p. 69.

object being "to procure casts in plaister of the most beautiful pieces of ancient Sculpture now collected in the National Museum" (the Louvre), the selection being entrusted to the ambassador.[1] Chancellor Livingston's own love of beauty was evident in the furnishings of his home at Clermont. He brought from France Gobelin tapestries, with which he covered the walls of his drawing-room, engravings and paintings, among them a portrait of Henry IV,[2] and other objects both rare and beautiful.

The original agreement of The American Academy of the Fine Arts with the subscribers' names, which may be seen at the New York Historical Society, has been reproduced in part here. A brother of Robert R. Livingston, Edward Livingston, then mayor of the city, became its first president. Aaron Burr actively coöperated in the organization. Another familiar name found early in the Academy's records is Robert Fulton, a pupil of Benjamin West and a painter as well as an inventor, who was a director, and whose widow and children — Fulton died in 1815 — were, by a special by-law, given free admission during their lives.

"The plan of the American Academy comprised a permanent as well as periodical exhibitions, lectures, schools, a library, and other agencies in art education, copied from a foreign model — that of the not long established Royal Academy in England."[3] The scope of the plan and the confidence with which many a foreign artist was honored with

[1] In an address delivered by DeWitt Clinton in 1816 we find this statement, "There are but two institutions of this kind in America — one in Mexico of an earlier, and one in Philadelphia, of a more recent origin." Three state academies of science had already been established: The American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, 1743; The American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Boston, 1780; The Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1799.

[2] American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, Sixteenth Annual Report, p. 327.

[3] John Durand, Life and Times of A. B. Durand, p. 27.

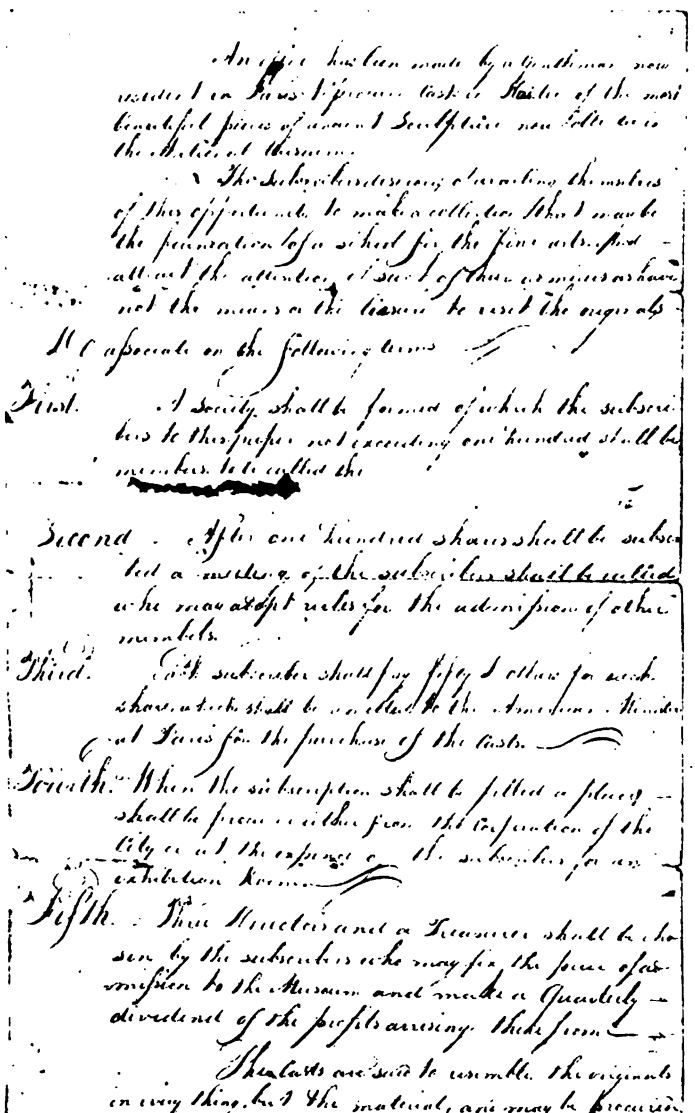
ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON
FROM THE ENGRAVING BY E. McKENZIE
AFTER THE PAINTING BY JOHN VANDERLYN

membership in a New World academy, must make us respect, if we do not share the optimism of the Directors, a small body of men in the midst of a community then little recognizing or appreciating art. Indeed, the entire scheme seems inflated and grandiose, with much machinery but little real mastery of the situation.

The name first suggested for the new organization was the New York Academy of the Fine Arts; but when on February 12, 1808, the charter was obtained, the word American was substituted for New York and Fine was omitted. In this charter[1] the following officers were named: Robert R. Livingston, President; John Trumbull, Vice President; DeWitt Clinton, David Hosack, John R. Murray, William Cutting, and Charles Wilkes, Directors. The same document limits the annual income to $5,000, and the stock of the corporation to one thousand shares of $25 each. When this charter was amended on March 28, 1817, the name was changed to the one we have used, The American Academy of the Fine Arts.

What of the personnel of this Academy? To say that it numbered among its members some of the most prominent men of New York, eminently respectable gentlemen, can hardly be deemed exaggeration when we recall that DeWitt Clinton, mayor of the city almost continuously from 1803 to 1815, attained one public office after another until 1825 when he was the honored governor who took part in the triumphal celebration of the opening of the Erie Canal; Dr. David Hosack was a practitioner, teacher, and writer on medical and scientific subjects, the professor of botany at Columbia College as early as 1795, the founder of the first public botanic garden in 1801, and of the hospital which afterwards became known as Bellevue; Cadwallader D. Colden, another

[1]The Charter and By-Laws of the American Academy of the Fine Arts, New York, 1817.



An offer has been made by a Gentleman now resident in Paris to procure Casts in Plaster of the most beautiful pieces of ancient Sculpture now [illegible] in the Mitchell Museum.

The Subscribers desirous of availing themselves of this opportunity to make a collection that may be the foundation of a school for the fine arts, find attract the attention of such of their [illegible] as have not the means or the leisure to visit the originals.

We associate on the following terms

First. A Society shall be formed of which the subscribers to this paper not exceeding one hundred shall be members to be called the

Second. After one hundred shares shall be subscribed a meeting of the subscribers shall be called who may adopt rules for the admission of other members.

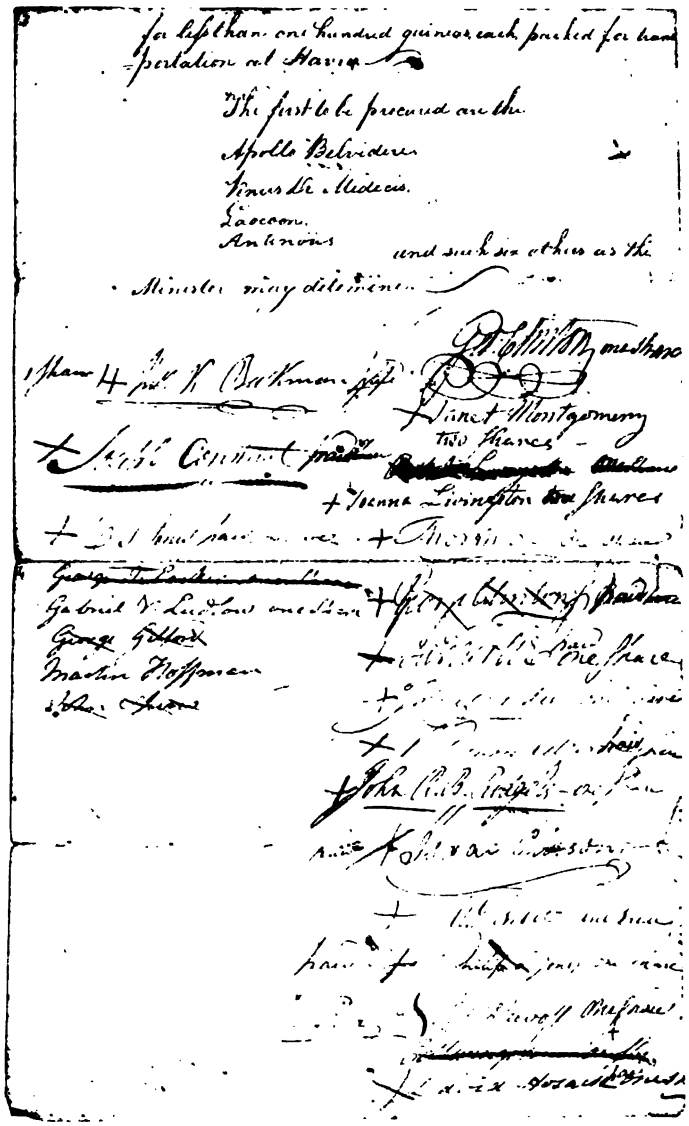
Third. Each subscriber shall pay fifty Dollars for each share which shall be remitted to the American Minister at Paris for the purchase of the Casts.

Fourth. When the subscription shall be filled a place shall be procured either from the Corporation of the City or at the expense of the subscribers for an exhibition Room.

Fifth. Three Directors and a Treasurer shall be chosen by the subscribers who may fix the price of admission to the Museum and make a Quarterly dividend of the profits arising therefrom.

The Casts are said to resemble the originals in every thing, but the material, and may be procured

AGREEMENT OF SUBSCRIBERS
THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS


for less than one hundred guineas each, packed for transportation at Havre

The first to be procured are the
Apollo Belvidere
Venus De Medecis.
Laocoon.
Antinous
and such six others as the
Minister may determine.

AGREEMENT OF SUBSCRIBERS
THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS

active worker for the Academy, stood at the head of his profession as a commercial lawyer and succeeded DeWitt Clinton as Mayor of New York; Edward Livingston was a noted jurist and statesman, best known for his masterly codification of the penal laws of Louisiana; and Robert R. Livingston was a man of international fame. He was one of five to draft the Declaration of Independence, the first Chancellor under a state constitution that he had helped draw up, as such the person to administer the oath of office to George Washington, when he became the first president of the United States, interested with Robert Fulton in developing a plan of steam navigation, and, most important of all perhaps, successful as an ambassador in securing the cession of Louisiana to the United States.

The Academy was honored also by its honorary membership, among whom were soon enrolled Napoleon Bonaparte, a personal friend of Chancellor Livingston, who "presented to the institution many valuable busts, antique statues, and rare prints,"[1] including twenty-four volumes of the works of Giovanni Battista Piranesi, the Italian etcher of ancient Rome, Vivant Denon, the French archaeologist and diplomatist, and Benjamin West, "the Quaker Boy who became the President of the Royal Academy." That West was interested in the museums of his day is shown by his going on a museum pilgrimage in 1801 to see the collection of art brought together in the Louvre.

John Trumbull was the one artist mentioned in the charter. That there were no other representatives of his guild is not remarkable in view of the fact that there were no others of sufficient standing, socially and artistically, to merit the honor; and although there is no authority for the statement, it is undoubtedly true that he was the moving force in the undertaking during its early days as he was during its later

[1]Tuckerman, Book of the Artists, p. 16.

history.[1] Of a most distinguished family, he had associated from his childhood with the great men of his day; just returned from England, he was well acquainted with the workings of the Royal Academy; and for both these reasons he would naturally have moulded the new institution on aristocratic lines. It may be said that no other artist of his period in this country received so much government patronage. We may surmise that he easily commanded it on the strength of his father's connection with the politicians of the day. His four historical pictures for the rotunda in the Capitol at Washington — the Declaration of Independence, the Surrender of Burgoyne, the Surrender of Cornwallis, and the Resignation of Washington at Annapolis — brought him in $32,000. Yet in his last years he was glad to accept an annuity of $1,000 from Yale College in return for a bequest to the college of his works. John Durand's analysis of Colonel Trumbull's character throws some light on the incidents in the Academy history in which he was the prime mover. Durand says, "He was of an excitable and even passionate temperament, which often rendered him arbitrary and dictatorial in certain public relations. Of superior intelligence, wide experience, noble in aspiration, and conscientious, he would defer only to those whom he knew to surpass him in these qualities."[2]

The youthful academy at once set about obtaining the collection of casts. Robert R. Livingston, as already recorded, was its first purchasing agent in Paris. His shipment of casts reached New York in 1803. Livingston's selection might well meet with approval as containing works of recog-

[1] Trumbull's name stands last on the original agreement of the subscribers, for he did not return from England to his native land until 1804, but previous to this time he had been appealed to by letter for suggestions in regard to the Academy. The following year he became a Director of the Academy.

[2] John Durand, John Trumbull, Boston, 1881.

ROBERT FULTON
FROM THE ENGRAVING BY W. S. LENEY
AFTER THE PAINTING BY BENJAMIN WEST

nized value. The list, as given in Dunlap[1] and furnished him by John G. Bogert, a member of the Academy, is as follows: the Apollo Belvedere, Venus of the Capitol, Laocoon, the Gladiator, Silenus and Bacchus, Grecian Cupid, Castor and Pollux, Germanicus, Hermaphrodite, Venus of the Bath, Torso of a Venus, with busts of Homer, Demosthenes, Niobe, Euripides, Hippocrates, Artemisia, Cleopatra, Alexander, Bacchus, Roma, Seneca, Augustus, Cicero, Brutus, and Xenophon. Inasmuch as a committee appointed in 1826 by the Academy to obtain a complete record of the history of the institution from its beginning failed to obtain a list of casts purchased by Livingston, even though they corresponded with members of Livingston's family and hunted through freight invoices, the accuracy of this list is questionable. These casts, however, were undoubtedly in the Academy's possession, whether obtained by Livingston, or otherwise.

In the spring of 1803 John Vanderlyn, an American artist who through the aid of Aaron Burr had already spent five years in study abroad and was returning for a second stay, was commissioned to add to the collection of casts from the antique, and to obtain copies of famous pictures. The agreement between John Vanderlyn and the American Academy runs as follows: "The said John Vanderlyn, in consideration of the covenants hereinafter expressed, on the part of the said Edward Livingston, doth covenant and agree to proceed, with all convenient speed, to the city of Paris, and from thence to Florence, Rome, and such other places in Italy, as he shall judge proper, in order to procure casts from antique statues and other pieces of sculpture, copies of the best paintings, and generally to conform himself to such instructions, as shall from time to time be given to him from the said Society,

[1]William Dunlap, History of the Arts of Design in the United States, Vol. I, p. 419.

and that the said John Vanderlyn will continue in the service aforesaid, for the space of One Year from the date he arrived. In consideration whereof service and in full of all personal expences the said John Vanderlyn the sum of Five Hundred Dollars previous to his embarkation and to give him a credit of Two thousand Dollars in Italy to be expended in procuring the said Casts and Copies." Vanderlyn, though he had the best of intentions, did not live up to this contract, for he

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
FROM AN ENGRAVING BY SCOLES.
PUBLISHED IN THE NEW YORK MAGAZINE

remained in England for some weeks before he crossed the Channel, and arriving in Paris took up his abode there, acting, as he wrote to John R. Murray, on the advice of Benjamin West, who assured him Paris was the best possible city in which to buy casts. Murray in reply exonerated him from blame for his delay, but urged a prompt compliance in future with the terms of the contract. A careful search has failed to reveal what casts were selected by Vanderlyn, though he sent some by the Brig Success. It is certain, however, that copies of four paintings: Veronese's Feast at the House of Levi, Titian's Scourging of Christ, Rubens'

Elevation of the Cross, and Caravaggio's Entombing of Christ, were received from him.

The arrival of the casts purchased by Livingston necessitated the use of some building for their exhibition. A structure on Greenwich Street erected for a circus or riding school and known as the Pantheon[1] was hired, and the statuary was on public exhibition there, but at a financial loss,[2] from 1803 to 1805, when the proprietor of the building intended taking it down.

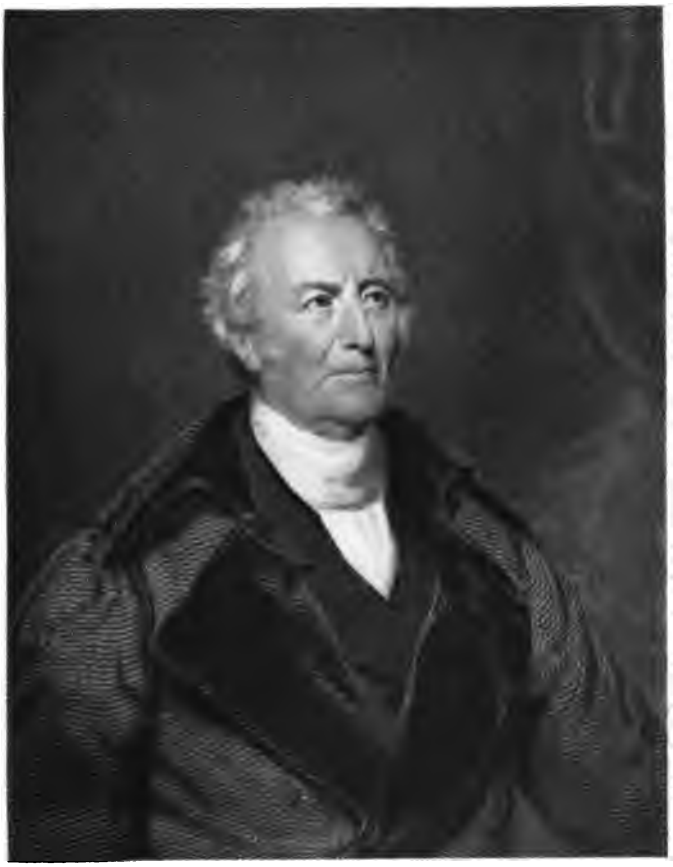
The Academy next accepted as a loan the upper part of the Government House facing Bowling Green, on the site of the present Custom House. "The Government House was originally designed for the residence of Washington, then President of the United States, but as the Capital removed to Philadelphia, the house was never occupied by him. It then became the Government House, and was the residence of Governor George Clinton and John Jay, and from 1799 to 1815 used for the Custom House."[3] At this same time John Wesley Jarvis, a brilliant, erratic painter, lived in the house, and Henry Inman was with him as an apprentice. Because of the demolition of the building in 1815 when it was succeeded by a handsome block of houses, this second exhibition hall was given up; the casts, of such great value to artists and students, were stowed away in obscurity in the store of Captain Farquhar on Vesey Street; and the institution which started with such high hopes, was almost forgotten.

In 1816 the Academy was revived, largely through the influence of DeWitt Clinton, then President, and the generous

[1]An old deed locates its exact position as 100 feet south from the southwest corner of Rector and Greenwich streets, with a frontage of 81 feet and a depth of 175 feet, running to high-water line, which is now Washington Street. — The Circus — its Origin and Growth prior to 1835, by Isaac J. Griswold, p. 92.

[2]Samuel Isham, History of American Painting, p. 186.

[3]R. H. Kelby, New York Historical Society, 1804-1904, p. 22.



JOHN TRUMBULL
FROM THE ENGRAVING BY ASHER B. DURAND
AFTER THE PAINTING BY THE ARTIST

aid of Dr. David Hosack, who, "with his accustomed and laudable liberality applied to the Merchants' Bank for a loan of $1500, offering his own personal note with the endorsement of John Pintard, Esq., as a security for repayment."[1] This money was to be used to fit up new galleries in what was hereafter called the New York Institution, granted the Academy by the corporation for the yearly rent of one peppercorn, "if lawfully demanded." This building on the north side of City Hall Park, fronting Chambers Street, on the site of the present County Court House, was erected in 1795 for an almshouse,[2] but was empty in 1816, as "the paupers had been transferred to a palace at Bellevue."[3] Upon the repeated application of the various scientific institutions of the city the use of this structure had finally been granted them for ten years. Among the Academy's comrades in possession were the American Museum of John Scudder and the New York Historical Society. Fitz Greene Halleck in his Fanny, published in 1819, refers humorously to this arrangement,

"It remains
To bless the hour the Corporation took it
Into their heads to give the rich in brains,
The worn-out mansion of the poor in pocket,
Once the old almshouse, now a school of wisdom,
Sacred to Scudder's shells and Dr. Griscom."[4]

[1]Report of a Committee of the American Academy of Fine Arts, in Secretary's Book, Vol. I.

[2]Mr. Kelby's description of the building is as follows: "The edifice was . . . 260 feet long by 44 broad, with two projections in front, 15 x 20 feet each, and was composed of brick, three stories high, with a basement, and with no claim to beauty."

[3]Dunlap, II: 276.

[4]Dr. John Griscom was a highly esteemed Quaker physician, who delivered lectures on chemistry in his office at the old almshouse.—Stephen Jenkins, The Greatest Street in the World, p. 96.

This same year (October 23d) DeWitt Clinton resigned and was succeeded as president by John Trumbull. The address

THE NEW YORK INSTITUTION
PLAN OF ROOMS

of the retiring president is a memorable one, as Cummings points out in these words: "This was probably the first address delivered before any Academy of Arts in the United States. It was delivered before the citizens of the first city

in the first state of the Union, and it will not be objected to, that it should be said it was by the first man in the State."[1] After discussing the origin, history, and uses of the fine arts, to show that such an institution as the American Academy was both desirable and practicable in New York, he pronounced a eulogy on Robert R. Livingston and Robert Fulton. What the men of his day thought of his speech may be seen in an article in The Columbian of October 24, 1816. "Yesterday at the appointed hour, the City Hall was thronged with ladies and gentlemen, who flocked to hear the promised dissertation. The principal officers of the army, the members of the Academy, the Mayor and municipal officers, with the judges of the Supreme Court, were also present." In commenting on the address itself, the editor continues: "Strong discrimination, exalted sentiment, purity of diction, and flashing imagery — if we might use the expression — characterized it throughout."

The revived Academy planned for an exhibition this same autumn, as it was its first opportunity to carry out this part of its aim. An announcement, placed in The Columbian of September 21, 1816, by its serious tone and carefully-phrased sentences reveals the personality of John Pintard, as well as the more formal advertising of his day:

"All artists, foreign or native, both as professors and amateurs, are invited to contribute. As the funds of the institution will be devoted to the establishment of schools for fostering genius and maturing talents from every clime, the Academy may confidently look up to a liberal patronage from a community who acknowledge a cultivation of the Fine Arts to be an additional polish to civilization, as well as the means

[1]Cummings, Historic Annals of the National Academy of Design, pp. 7–8. The address may also be found there, as well as in pamphlet form at the New York Historical Society.

DEWITT CLINTON
FROM THE ENGRAVING BY V. BALCH
AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY E. AMES

of perpetuating whatever may be useful, virtuous and laudable to society.

JOHN PINTARD, Sec'y."

The exhibition proved successful far beyond the expectation of the officers. It contained the Lear, Ophelia, and Orlando, by West, lent by Mrs. Robert Fulton and later purchased by a special subscription, and Vanderlyn's Ariadne, "the first successful representation by an American artist of a mythological subject,"[1] exhibited in London four years before with great credit to the artist. The organization after a decade of struggle seemed to be on a firm footing. Among the prominent men enrolled as honorary members soon after 1816 were Canova and Joseph Nollekens among sculptors, Martin Shee, then President of the Royal Academy, Washington Allston, Henry Raeburn, and Thomas Lawrence. A sentence from Shee's letter of acceptance seems to express the feeling common among those thus honored: "I cannot but congratulate the friends of the Fine Arts in the United States on the formation of an Establishment for their cultivation in a Country where all the materials of greatness appear to accumulate with a rapidity unexampled in the history of other nations. An early sense of the importance of the fine Arts amongst a people, is perhaps the most promising indication of general refinement, as well as the most certain pledge of future fame."[2] Nollekens, indulging in the florid style of the period, declares that it is peculiarly gratifying to him to be thus admitted into an Institution which discovers a just appreciation of the Fine Arts in the great Atlantic Empire; and to be allowed in consequence of this admission to regard himself "as a part, however small, of that majestic

[1]Frederic De Peyster, Biographical Sketch of Chancellor Livingston, p. 10.

[2]The manuscript may be seen in the Museum Library.

State, which springing from the base of liberty, towers loftily in power amid the nations of the earth and is now by the cultivation of Literature and the Fine Arts arraying itself in Beauty."[1] Raeburn appreciated the honor so greatly that he sent to the new organization as his contribution a portrait of Vanbrugh Livingston, who was abroad at the time.

The By-laws, passed December 18th, 1816, furnish entertaining reading. For example, a part of Section X, Of the Exhibitions: "And be it further ordained, That there shall be two annual exhibitions in the gallery and chambers of the Academy, the one in the spring and the other in the fall. . . . All Artists of distinguished merit as Painters, Sculptors, and Designers, shall be permitted to exhibit their works. Amateurs in these arts shall be invited to expose, in the gallery of the Academy, any of their performances which may be thought worthy of the exhibition; and persons having in their possession pieces of sufficient merit, may be invited to contribute them for an exhibition. But no piece or subject for exhibition shall be received after the time which shall be mentioned in a notice, to be for that purpose published. Previous to each exhibition, a catalogue of the paintings, statues, busts, drawings, models, and engravings shall be published under the direction of the Keeper of the Academy. The price for entrance into the gallery of the Academy, to those who are not entitled to a free entrance, shall be twenty-five cents, to be paid to the Door-keeper; and the price of a catalogue, which shall be furnished by the Door-keeper when required, shall be twelve and a half cents."

A part of Section XI, Of Entrance to the Gallery of the Academy, is amusing in its details. It reads, "That all persons entitled to free admission, may receive from the Secretary or Keeper of the Academy, a metal pass or ticket,

[1]Records of the American Academy of Fine Arts. These may be seen in the New York Historical Society.

of such form and with such device as may be approved of by the Directors, for which the Secretary or Keeper shall be entitled to receive, for the funds of the Academy, from the person taking the same, the actual cost of the said pass or ticket. That the person receiving the same, shall have his or her name engraved thereon, and there shall also be engraved thereon, the words 'Not transferable' . . . The exhibition of this metal pass to the Door-keeper, shall at all times be a sufficient passport for such person to the gallery of the Academy, when the said gallery is open for exhibition."

In point of fact, exhibitions do not appear to have been held so frequently as twice each year, owing, it may be, to the scarcity of material to draw on or the difficulty of bringing together, twice annually, paintings sufficient in number to make a really attractive exhibit. It was scarcely to be expected that after 1826, when the National Academy of Design was established, the two academies could hold exhibitions with equal success, and presumably the younger academy with its membership of artists would have a decided advantage over the older organization. The catalogues of the different exhibitions do not increase in size and interest, but rather decline. For example, an exhibition in 1817 contains 252 paintings and miniatures, besides sculpture, while the sixteenth annual exhibition, held in 1835, has only 92 entries, paintings and sculpture combined; and what is true of numbers is also true, to some extent, of the character of the works exhibited. According to an advertisement in the New York Evening Post even as late as December 11, 1835, we learn that the sixteenth annual exhibition "will open to the publick about the 10th of November, by which time the sidewalk of Mr. Astor's Hotel will be laid down." Was it, perchance, the sidewalk that caused the delay, or the scarcity of pictures?

The year 1816, then, stands as the high-water mark of the

Academy's activity and influence. Succeeding exhibitions, though they included paintings of merit — the most highly valued being Lawrence's full-length portrait of Benjamin West, obtained by a number of gentlemen for the Academy by a subscription of $2,000 — did not win great popular interest; in fact, the daily attendance was not large enough to pay the doorkeeper's salary. Several of John Trumbull's works, among them his Suffer Little Children and Woman Taken in Adultery, were purchased, but the debt for them was not paid until years later and then only by return of the pictures.

In addition to the regular exhibitions, occasionally some one picture was advertised in glowing terms as a special attraction. The following notice, in the New York Evening Post for March 6, 1826, may stand as representative of these announcements:

"EXHIBITION at the gallery of the Academy of Fine Arts, of the splendid picture representing the great coronation of the Emperor Napoleon, in the Cathedral at Paris, by the celebrated painter, David. The size of the picture is 750 square feet. The Emperor is represented placing the crown on the head of the Empress Josephine. His family, Pope Pius VII, the Cardinals, the Ambassadors, and the principal characters of the Imperial Court, are all represented with the rich costumes they were decorated with on the day of the ceremony."

The chroniclers of the Academy history, Dunlap and Cummings, discuss its failure to accomplish its high aims; but as academicians of the National Academy of Design they were liable to prejudice and partisanship, and especially hostile to John Trumbull. Cummings gives two reasons for the American Academy's failure: the unchangeableness in its exhibitions, which were not suited to a novelty-seeking

public, and John Trumbull's opposition to the opening of schools. At one time the casts were open to students for copying in summer from six to eight o'clock in the morning; at another, from six to nine o'clock. But, according to Cummings, when the student's zeal had led him to early rising, he found many times that the keeper, not sharing the same stimulus, had overslept. One fatal morning when Messrs. Cummings and Agate were thus disappointed, Mr. Trumbull coming along learned of their plight, but only to remark, as Dunlap records his words, "These young men should remember that the gentlemen have gone to a great expense in importing casts, and that they (the students) have no property in them. They must remember that beggars are not to be choosers."[1] Certainly such words might well sound the death knell of practical usefulness for any institution.

After the National Academy of Design in 1826 established a school, the Directors of the American Academy tried to retrieve their early failure with the students, but pitiful is the contrast between their great hopes and trifling accomplishment. At three different times, in 1826, 1829, and 1839, special advertisements were put in the newspapers, offering opportunity for students to use the gallery certain evenings, with "lights, fuel, and the necessary accommodations furnished at the expense of the Academy." That the directors expected a throng of applicants, among them boisterous spirits, is shown by the rules for the students engrossed on the minutes in 1826:

"If any be guilty of idleness or improper behaviour in the School, and do not quietly submit to the Rules and orders which shall from time to time be established for their regulation; or shall not behave with proper respect and civility to the Officers of the Academy, it shall be the duty of the Keeper, Secretary or other Officer, witnessing such misconduct, to

[1]Dunlap, II, p. 280.

report the same to the Board of Directors at their next meeting; and they in their discretion shall reprimand, rusticate or expel the Offender; and any Student who shall be expelled for misconduct, shall never be readmitted to the privileges of the Academy.

"During the time they are drawing, all the Students shall observe silence; endeavoring to do their work quietly, industriously and without making dirt in the room, by scattering or trampling on chalk, or otherwise; and when they have finished the work of the day, each one shall put away his drawing, paper and materials carefully and neatly."

No such crowd of eager applicants besieged their doors; the students were but a scattering few. In 1830, four years later, the President and members rejoiced over even a modicum of success, the record reading thus:

"The President submitted for examination, Two Drawings executed by young gentlemen in the Gallery of Sculpture under his inspection; and reported verbally that from fifteen to twenty others had attended, since the Gallery was opened for evening study, with great zeal and various success; none of them however had quite completed drawings, which they were disposed to submit at present, to the examination of the Board. Whereupon the following Resolution was unanimously adopted. The Board of Directors of the American Academy of the Fine Arts, having seen and examined two drawings, lately executed from the Statue of Germanicus in the Gallery of the Sculpture, . . . feel it to be their duty to express the satisfaction they have had in viewing these the first fruits of regular study under their protection — and have no hesitation in adding . . . that they fully expect to have in their power, the pleasing duty of offering a vote of approbation to other young gentlemen."

Samuel F. B. Morse, later the first president of the National Academy of Design, in a most interesting manuscript which

he called Remarks on the bad tendency of the American Academy previous to the formation of the National Academy, discussed what he called the "essential error" of the American Academy as follows: "The Academy needs new modeling; its defects must be looked at not for the purpose of finding fault, but to devise and apply a proper remedy; its evils have grown out of its very constitution, in creating it a stockholding institution; as any one can be a member by paying twenty-five dollars, and thus be entitled to vote, at the election of President, Vice President, and Directors, which Directors are composed not of Artists only or even of a majority of artists, but of men highly respectable and intelligent in other professions, but whose professions must chiefly or entirely engross their minds. This circumstance has a natural tendency to create want of confidence in the minds of Artists, and it has created it." In a letter to De Witt Clinton, written in 1826, the same point is made very plainly. "The American Academy of Fine Arts was undoubtedly formed with the best intentions towards the Fine Arts and its professors; it was formed on different principles (perhaps necessarily) from any Academy of Arts in the world. The Pennsylvania Academy of Arts was afterwards formed on similar principles; they differ from other Academies in this essential particular, that Artists have the direction in all European Academies, while in our Academies Artists are in the minority. Our Academies may therefore be looked upon as experiments, and the similarity of results in Philadelphia and in this city has proved that there is something radically wrong in their constitution."

Still a different statement of the reason for the Academy's failure is given by John Durand[1] in his John Trumbull. "The truth is, that in his connexion with the American

[1]John Durand, John Trumbull, Boston, 1881, quoted in Life and Times of A. B. Durand, p. 27.

DAVID HOSACK, M. D.
FROM THE ENGRAVING BY ASHER B. DURAND
AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY THOMAS SULLY

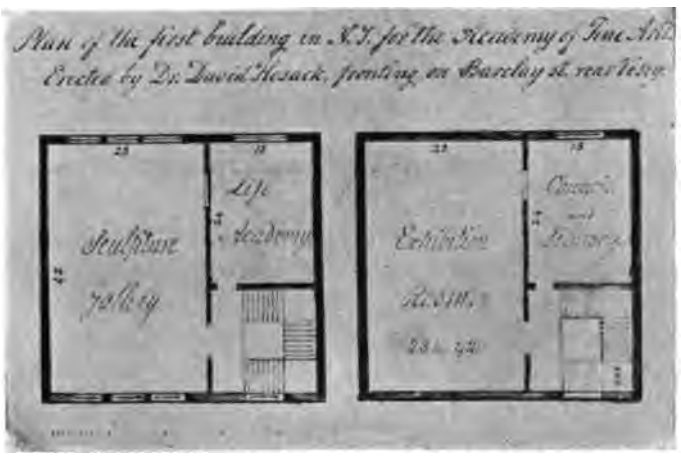
Academy of the Fine Arts . . . Trumbull was trying to make water run up hill. The difficulty between him and the artists who seceded from that institution was not so much due to him as to a condition beyond his control. The plan of the American Academy (was) not adapted to this country or manageable by directors taken from the non-professional classes. The public at that time cared very little about art; there were few artists, and the judgment of stockholders, whose authority in the institution grew out of the money they paid for their shares, did not fulfil the same ends as the more intelligent patronage of a king and the support of a cultivated aristocracy. Colonel Trumbull was familiar with the foreign condition of things, and the mistake he made was in supposing that a kindred institution could be at once established in an entirely new country. The American Academy of the Fine Arts, accordingly, is simply a forerunner of similar attempts that have utterly failed or proved abortive through a similar misconception of means in relation to ends."

Upon the dissolution of the Academy in 1841, its records were given to the New York Historical Society by Alexander J. Davis, the last Secretary. These contain the concluding chapter of its history. In 1831 the City Corporation had not seen fit longer to give homes to the various literary and scientific institutions in the New York Institution. This result had been imminent for several years. In 1826 at an Anniversary Banquet of the Academy the following toast had been offered: "The Honorable Corporation of the City of New York: They have given to our academies, scientific and literary institutions, for the present, 'a local habitation and their name'; may they do honour to themselves by making the shelter a gift." Compelled to seek new quarters, the directors entered into a contract with Dr. David Hosack for building a gallery in Barclay Street, occupying a part of

the ground now covered by the Astor House.[1] Here as elsewhere the institution continued dormant.

A circular issued in March, 1839, to give notification to the public of certain resolutions passed by the directors, seems to have been a last vain bid for popularity. The resolutions are as follows:

"Resolved, That the room, No. 8, Barclay-street, hereto-



PLAN OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY'S BUILDING
BARCLAY STREET

fore occupied by Col. Trumbull be, and the same is hereby set apart as a perpetual Exhibition Room for Artists; for the Academician Pictures, Books, and other property of the Academy suitable for an Academical Studio; and that said Room be also used as a place of meeting for all or any purposes tending to promote the interests of the Fine Arts.

"That the Rev. Clergy, Editors of public press, and all persons engaged in education, be, and are hereby invited to frequent said Academical Studio, in order to become the better acquainted with the state and progress of the Fine

[1] John Sartain, Reminiscences of a Very Old Man, p. 140.

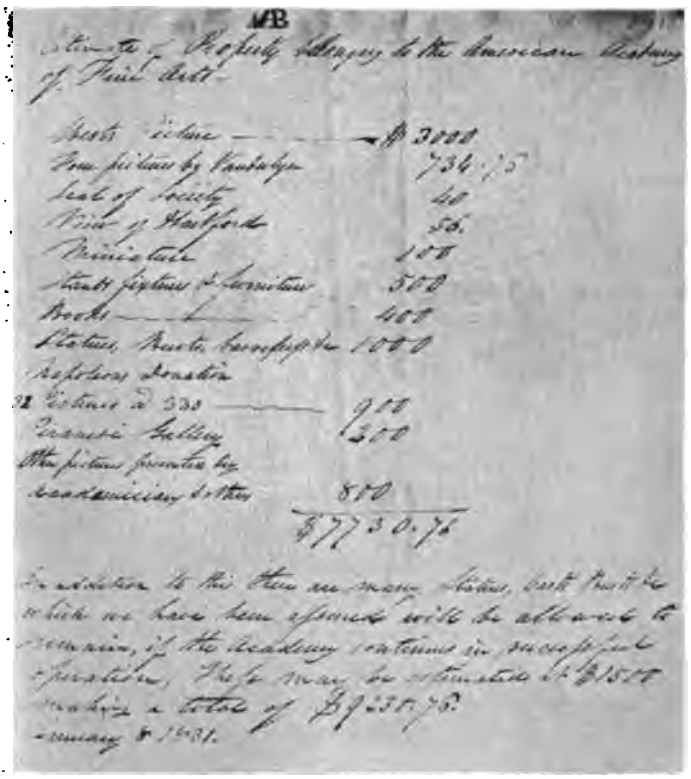
Arts in our Emporium, and to circulate information to the public.

"Resolved, That an Antique School be opened for Students in the Sculpture Gallery, on the evenings of Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday in each week, from seven to nine o'clock, under the inspection of Visitors, to be chosen from time to time by the Academy."

The Keeper's Book records that in April, 1839, a fire occurred in the library of the Academy, which consumed many of the books and prints, especially the case of Piranesi presented by Napoleon Bonaparte, and damaged the paintings. "Such was the apathy of the stockholders and the neglect of the artists that no measures were taken to revive the energies of the Academy. Rents accumulating, the property was yielded to the lawful trust of the President and Treasurer, and much of the same returned to the donors. The remaining effects, together with the portrait of West, were sold to pay debts. (About $2,400 was due Dr. Hosack's heirs for rent.) The portrait went to the Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford." The casts were sold to the National Academy of Design for $400, and remained in use in the Academy's school until they were almost all destroyed by fire in 1905.

Mr. Davis, ignoring the Academy's comparative lack of success, dismisses the entire subject with a complacent statement, "The object of the founders had been fulfilled; the casts had been obtained; the schools had been established through their instrumentality, and the Arts were placed in the keeping of the great body of Artists." Although from the vantage point of the twentieth century we cannot agree with every clause of this valedictory, we can at least recognize that John Trumbull and his associates in the Academy had given an initial impetus to the progress of art in this city, setting in motion forces still operative and inaugurating

methods of museum administration in use today. For their work as pioneers they merit grateful appreciation.



STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY'S RESOURCES

2. THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ESTABLISHED IN 1804.

This organization deserves a place among institutions promoting the interests of art in New York City, both because of the valuable collections deposited within its walls

today and because of several pages in its history that are unmistakably a part of the history of art in the city. This account is confined to those incidents.

John Pintard, for some years Secretary of the American Academy, the first to agitate the free school system, a man unusually gifted as a leader, originated the plan for the organization of this institution, the principal design of which is to "collect and preserve whatever may relate to the natural, civil, or ecclesiastical history of the United States in general, and of this state in particular."[1] Egbert Benson, a distinguished judge and devoted patriot, became its first president. At least two of its founders, DeWitt Clinton, the noted jurist, and Dr. David Hosack, the eminent educator, were prominent in the American Academy of the Fine Arts. By invitation of the Academy in 1809, the society occupied a room in the Government House, and in 1816 was a neighbor of the Academy in the New York Institution.

In fact, John Pintard three years earlier had suggested the plan of setting aside one city building, either the Almshouse or the Bridewell, for the common occupancy of the literary and scientific institutions, in a letter dated August 28, 1812, and addressed to the Mayor, DeWitt Clinton. That public-spirited man, however, devoted as he was to the American Academy and the Historical Society, observed that the request was "too impudent to be submitted to the Corporation."[2] A spirit of daring is shown in John Pintard's memorable letter. Referring to the war which the country was then waging, he wrote, "It may be urged that this is not the moment for such great enterprizes — That our City is paralyzed by the present times — and that little encouragement can be expected for the promotion of literary establishments — True — Inter Arma, Silent Leges — But we have a right,

[1] R. H. Kelby, The New York Historical Society, 1804-1904, p. 2.
[2] R. H. Kelby, The New York Historical Society, 1804-1904, p. 25.

JOHN PINTARD

FROM A PEN-AND-INK DRAWING BY AN UNKNOWN ARTIST

Auspice Teucro, to hope for better times, and it may be proper to anticipate any other applications respecting the public buildings. For this purpose a respectful Memorial will be shortly presented to the Corporation."

When this memorial from "sundry Literary Societies" was laid before the Common Council in May, 1814, its committee took a full year to draw up what its members deemed a suitable report, recommending in most flowery words the granting of the petition. "Would not a garden spot, in which the young plants of science might be cultivated, be a suitable & delectable first fruit offering to the Goddess of Peace?" they asked. "With considerable success they (the petitioners) have already planted and nourished several; and if the cultivation is only moistened with your friendly dew, these young trees will ere long exhibit a luxuriance and spread into a grove of science, under the shade of which your men of genius may securely repose."[1] So the "constellation of science," as these grandiloquent gentlemen phrased it, began "to illuminate our hemisphere."

During the first fifty years of the Historical Society's existence, the members had "acquired a small collection of portraits, and proposed (in 1856) to enlarge and extend their Art Collections, with a view of providing a public gallery of art in this city."[2] This aim was greatly strengthened when on June 22, 1858, the entire collection of the New York Gallery was transferred to the Historical Society and deposited in perpetuity in its rooms. According to the agreement, signed by Jonathan Sturges, to whose hearty coöperation the Society was greatly indebted for this valuable addition to its artistic treasures, and John Durand, for the New York Gallery, and Luther Bradish and Andrew Warner for the Historical

[1]Quoted in The History of the New York Society Library, by Austin B. Keep, pp. 294 and 296.

[2]R. H. Kelby, The New York Historical Society, 1804-1904, p. 52.

Society, the Society was to preserve the collection in good order, provide a suitable gallery for its "reception, safe-keeping, and proper exhibition," and admit all members of the Gallery free upon presentation of their Gallery tickets. Appended to the agreement is a list of the works of art in the collection: seventy-nine paintings and miniatures, three pieces of statuary, and about two hundred and fifty engravings.[1]

THE NEW YORK INSTITUTION, CITY HALL PARK, NORTH END, 1825
FROM A LITHOGRAPH

The next year Mr. James Lenox presented to the Society the Nineveh Sculptures, consisting of thirteen reliefs representing winged and eagle-headed human figures and the sacred tree, and in 1860 some generous citizens secured for the Society the Abbott Collection of Egyptian Antiquities, collected by Dr. Henry Abbott during a residence of twenty years in Cairo, and for several years exhibited in the Stuyvesant Institute on Broadway, above Bleecker Street, with an admission price of twenty-five cents. This is a really remarkable

[1]See Page 67.

collection which includes objects of great interest, such as three mummies of the Sacred Bull Apis, and a gold necklace and ear-rings stamped with the name of Menes, the first Pharaoh of Egypt, who reigned 2750 years before Christ. Thus within three years the Historical Society came into the possession of a valuable nucleus for a large public gallery of art.

"The Society was the first to formulate a plan to establish a museum and art gallery for the public in Central Park."[1] The action of the Executive Committee, August 14, 1860, reads as follows:

"*Whereas*, The position and character of the building known as the New York State Arsenal, near the southeastern corner of Central Park, point it out as a proper location for a grand museum of antiquities, science, and art:

"And, *Whereas*, There appears to be no existing institution whose present collections and prospects for future acquisitions seem more suitable to the occasion than this Society, the recent and prospective increase of whose museum and gallery of art already indicates the rapidly approaching necessity of a more ample provision for their accommodation:

"*Therefore*, mindful of their relations and duties to the citizens of New York, who have so liberally sustained all their efforts to place upon an enduring foundation the establishment of this Society as a public institution, whose collections in all departments may be accessible to all classes of the community, subject only to such regulations as may be essential for security and preservation, and anticipating cordial and universal approbation:

"*Resolved*, That a Committee of five members, of which the president of the Society shall be a member and requested to act as Chairman, be appointed to take such preliminary

[1]New York Historical Society, 1804-1904, p. 53.

measures as may be advisable, with a view to securing the State Arsenal and adjoining ground in the Central Park for the museum of the Society."

R. H. Kelby's account of the further proceedings may well be quoted entire. "An act to improve Central Park was passed by the Legislature, March 25, 1862, authorizing the Commissioner to set apart and appropriate to the Society

MT. SAINT VINCENT, CENTRAL PARK
FROM A LITHOGRAPH BY GEORGE HAYWARD,
PUBLISHED IN VALENTINE'S MANUAL, 1862

the building known as the New York State Arsenal, with such grounds adjoining as the Commissioners may determine necessary for the purpose of establishing and maintaining by the Society a museum of antiquities and science and a gallery of art. Efforts to secure the necessary funds for the promotion of the plan failed."[1]

At the Arsenal, or Central Park Museum, as Tuckerman calls it, were already stored no less than eighty-seven plaster

[1]New York Historical Society, 1804-1904, p. 54.

casts of Thomas Crawford's works, presented to the Park Commissioners by Louisa W. Crawford, and his Flora, presented by R. K. Haight. "In 1866 . . . the Comptroller was authorized to put the brick building formerly used for a convent chapel (of the Mt. St. Vincent buildings at McGown's Pass) in order for use as a statuary gallery and museum."[1] The Mt. St. Vincent buildings served manifold purposes, ministering "to the appetites of those who visited these then remote parts" by a refreshment-house known as Stetson's Hotel and to their finer sensibilities through a temple of art. Great hopes were built upon this venture, but when the building was destroyed by fire January 2, 1881, the statuary was carried to the Arsenal building and there stored.

To continue the records of the Historical Society, "In consequence of the low ground and the proximity of the reservoir near the Arsenal Building, the Society urged a change to higher ground in the Park. The Legislature passed an act, April 29, 1868, setting apart for the use of the Society a site in the Park, covering Eighty-first to Eighty-fourth Streets, three hundred feet west of Fifth Avenue, the building to be erected at the expense of the Society.

"Renewed efforts were made in 1870 to carry out the plan of the Society to establish a museum of history, antiquities, and art, by the erection of a building on the new site in the Park; but owing to the great cost of the proposed building, and the erection of the same on city property, the scheme was finally abandoned."[2] To all interested in the history of The Metropolitan Museum of Art these facts have a peculiar interest, for 1870 was the very year of the incorporation of the Museum, and in 1871 the Legislature passed an act providing $500,000 for the erection of a building for the Museum

[1]American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, Sixteenth Annual Report, p. 433.

[2]New York Historical Society, 1804-1904, p. 55.

within Central Park or some other of the public land belonging to the City. It was difficult for the journals of the day to predict which project would prosper. An article in the Home Journal for April 20, 1870, discussing the prospects of the venerable Historical Society and the youthful Metropolitan Museum of Art, sums up the status of the former in these words, "Here is a collection *in posse* many times larger and more valuable than that of the British Museum. Nothing remains to be done for its completion but the simple transferring *in esse*. The process is the simplest imaginable. Given the requisite funds, and we have an art museum equal to our highest demands, representing all the masterpieces and products of every age and school; a grand art-focus of the continent, attracting genius, talent, and taste from the remotest regions, and irradiating all with its refining, inspiring influences. The charter and the grant of a site for the institution in the Central Park, have long been in the possession of the Historical Society, and everything is now ready for the supplementary movement."

Two more gifts of importance have greatly increased the treasures in the Historical Society's building; one, the Bryan Collection, numbering two hundred and fifty pictures, given by Mr. Thomas J. Bryan in 1867; the other, one hundred and fifty paintings, an admirable supplement in character to the Bryan Collection, bequeathed in 1882 by Mr. Louis Durr, a gold and silver refiner, who had been a devoted student from boyhood of the old schools of painting. The earlier collection, gathered as a labor of love by Mr. Bryan during many years of foreign residence, was for some time arranged on the walls of a spacious room in a house on Broadway at the corner of Thirteenth Street. The guide books of the day call this the Bryan Gallery of Christian Art. It was a public gallery, for admission to which a fee of twenty-five cents was charged. It was well worth seeing, as it contained among other inter-

esting paintings several Italian works of the Trecento, a Rembrandt portrait, a portrait by Van Dyck, and a Last Judgment by Lucas Van Leyden. Contemporary writers refer to the delight of seeing Mr. Bryan, a charming old gentleman with snowy hair and florid complexion, in picturesque robe and velvet cap, seated in an old-fashioned armchair in his gallery like a venerable burgomaster of Holland or a merchant prince of Florence surrounded by his treasures. His was a life of leisure and affluence which was redeemed from mere pleasure seeking and given aim and worth by an absorbing love of art. Finding it impossible to insure his collection, exposed as the paintings were, without great expense, he deposited them for a time in the Cooper Union and then gave them to the Historical Society.

A delightful little volume, called Companion to the Bryan Gallery of Christian Art,[1] and written by the eminent essayist and Shakesperian scholar, Richard Grant White, was published by Baker, Godwin & Co. in 1853. This truly literary catalogue states in the preface, "This gallery has in its historical character an importance not possessed by any other ever opened to the public in this country. The rise and progress of each of the great schools, the Italian, the German, the Flemish, the Dutch, and the French, can be traced by characteristic productions of those schools in all the stages of their development, which hang upon these walls. This peculiarity of the collection is almost of equal importance with the intrinsic beauty and excellence of a large portion of the works which compose it. . . . The author declines to express any opinion upon the authenticity of the many pictures here which bear some of the greatest names in art; but he wishes it to be understood that he does this solely

[1]Printed with the proceedings of the New York Historical Society on the announcement of the death of Thomas J. Bryan, June, 1870. This catalogue may be found in the Museum Library.

on account of his entire want of confidence in his ability to speak with the least authority upon that subject. . . . Mr. Bryan has bought and cleaned his pictures himself; and of those which he thus laboriously brought to light, he has rejected six for every one which now hangs upon his walls. But . . . the author would not do himself justice, to say nothing of justice to the collection and its proprietor, did he not state that his confidence in the correctness with which the works have been attributed to the various masters whose names they bear, as well as his admiration for the intrinsic beauty of most of them, and his interest in the collection as a whole, has increased *pari passu*, with his study of the paintings."

3. THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN

This well-established organization of eighty-five years' existence was the outgrowth of an earlier Drawing Association, which was started upon the suggestion of Samuel F. B. Morse, an artist as well as a scientist, "For the Promotion of the Arts and the Assistance of Students," in other words, a simple organization for mutual improvement in drawing formed by a few young men, mere boys many of them must have seemed to the honorable gentlemen of the older academy. Morse, wishing to reconcile the petty dissensions of the artists, invited a number of them to his room one evening, "ostensibly to eat strawberries and cream, but really to beguile them into something like agreeable intercourse."[1] This gathering was the forerunner of many meetings of the Drawing Association. The organization was effected on the eighth of November, 1825, in the rooms of the Historical Society in the New York Institution. Its members, thirty in number, included such familiar names as Henry Inman, A. B. Durand, Thomas S. Cummings, later its historian,

[1]Tuckerman, p. 167.

William Dunlap, C. C. Ingham, and Thomas Cole. Among its simple rules were found these: "That its members should meet in the evening, three times a week, for drawing. That each member furnish his own drawing material. That the expense of light, fuel, etc. be paid by equal contributions. That new members should be admitted on a majority vote — paying five dollars entrance fee. That the lights should be lighted at six and extinguished at nine o'clock p. m."[1]

Not long after the organization of the association, Colonel Trumbull, with the stately dignity becoming a gentleman of the Old School, entered the room where the members were drawing, took the president's chair as belonging to him, and with authority asked all present to sign the matriculation book of the American Academy, thus enrolling as students of that institution. This they refused to do, not considering themselves under the Academy's tuition. Great was the indignation expressed, and the suggestion of forming a rival academy was immediately made. The association, however, really desired a union with the academy could the artists obtain such a share in the direction of the academy as they deemed necessary for the welfare of the institution.

This statement is borne out by the writings of John Inman, brother of Henry Inman, who under the name of Boydell published letters in the Morning Courier, and by the words of Samuel F. B. Morse, than whom surely no one knew better the full details of the early history of the National Academy of Design. In the letter to DeWitt Clinton previously quoted, Mr. Morse wrote, "In the last autumn they (the artists) were accidentally (I may say) associated together as a Drawing Association; groundless suspicion was entertained of their views by some of the Board of Directors of the Academy of Fine Arts, which has at length resulted in creating the

[1]Cummings, p. 22.

SAMUEL FINLEY BREESE MORSE
FROM A PAINTING BY HIMSELF
PROPERTY OF MRS. FRANZ RUMMEL

very object of their suspicions, I mean a new academy of arts. Every effort was made on our part to prevent this result; amicable negociation was entered into between the Artists and the American Academy of Fine Arts. It was mutually agreed that the whole plan of the Academy should be revised by the next Board of Directors; we were promised six artists in the Board; the Artists unitedly bore the expence of $100 to make four of those who were to represent them eligible according to a rule of the Academy; the whole business therefore turned on the election or non-election of the six artists representatives. The election took place and two only of the six were chosen; the Artists were therefore rejected from the Institution. It was our intention to have published all the proceedings which led to this result. But wishing to avoid everything like controversy, we came to the determination of forming a new academy of arts according to our own views; and, leaving the gentlemen of the Academy of Fine Arts to manage their Institution, direct all our energies to the building up of our own."

Several times during the ensuing years union was suggested and committees appointed, but without success. One passage of arms from the New York American of May, 1826, illustrates the strained relations between the two organizations. At the anniversary banquet of the American Academy, a member gave the following toast: "The recent association of living artists: May their works survive them." A few days afterwards The American published a rhyming letter from A Living Artist which showed plainly how the shaft rankled. The following day the member of the American Academy, signing himself A Doctor and Director, retorted that as his first complimentary wish had not been pleasing, he would change it to one more likely of fulfilment: "May a Living Artist survive his works." In all the wrangling between the older and the younger organization, Morse, though of neces-

sity drawn into the arena to defend his brethren, appears to most excellent advantage, acting with tact, courtesy, and fairness. Trumbull, on the other hand, shows plainly a feeling of wounded dignity and injured pride.

In 1826, on the 19th of January, the New York Drawing Association became the National Academy of Design, "The first institution in the country established by and under the exclusive control and management of the professional artists."[1] The name was carefully chosen. The adjective National was used because any less inclusive word would be inferior to American, the word employed by the older Academy. The arts of design were understood to be painting, sculpture, architecture, and engraving, just what this new academy was concerned with; whereas the fine arts, the members considered, included poetry, music, and other arts. On April 5, 1828, the new organization was formally incorporated by the State. According to Mr. Morse's plan adopted by the association, fifteen professional artists from its membership were chosen as members of the new Academy, these men to elect not more than fifteen others to be associated with them as members. Upon this body devolved the control of the National Academy of Design. Samuel F. B. Morse was chosen President.

The greater glory of Morse as a scientist has dimmed the lesser glory as an artist. These annals recall a fact easily forgotten, that Morse devoted to art over thirty years of his life, from his graduation at Yale to about 1844. He studied in London with Allston and when but twenty-four years old obtained a gold medal for a statue, The Dying Hercules, his first attempt at modeling, sent to the Adelphi Society of Art.

The new academy immediately made plans for its first exhibition, which was held "in a room in the second story of a

[1]Cummings, p. 5.

house on the southeast corner of Broadway and Reade Streets; an ordinary dwelling, and not covering an area of more than 25 x 50 feet, with no other than the usual side windows. It was open from 9 a. m. to 10 p. m., and 'lighted with gas.' The gas consisted of two-light ordinary branch burners — six lights in all, for the whole exhibition."[1] The total number of objects exhibited — paintings, drawings, engravings — was one hundred and seventy-nine. Among the exhibitors, all of whom were American artists, we are surprised to find the name of John Trumbull, who was represented by a portrait of a lady. The catalogue bears on the title-page the suggestive motto from Thomson,

> "Ours are the plans of peace,
> To live like brothers, and conjunctive all,
> Embellish life."

This first effort was ushered in with due ceremony at a private opening by invitation, at which were present "His Excellency Governor Clinton and suite, his Honor the Mayor, the Common Council of the City, the Judges of the Courts, the Faculty of Columbia College, the members of the American Academy of Fine Arts, and persons of distinction at 'present residing in the city.'" The members of the Academy of Design appeared "with a white rosette in their buttonholes."

Financially the exhibition was not wholly successful, a deficit having been met by an assessment upon the members. Even this first exhibition was limited to the works of living artists; that present day artists might have unlimited opportunity, no Old Masters might apply. For the second exhibition the works of living artists only, not before exhibited by the Academy of Design, were accepted, and by the third

[1]Cummings, pp. 34, 35.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT
FROM THE ENGRAVING BY G. PARKER
AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY HENRY INMAN

exhibition another restriction was added, that none but original works should be exhibited. Yet a member of the National Academy could write to John Neagle of the Philadelphia Academy in 1828, "Our exhibition this year far surpasses our former exhibitions, and it is furnishing us with funds for future operations."

The schools were opened the first year in the rooms of the Philosophical Society with some forty students and two lecturers, Dr. F. G. King on Anatomy, also appointed a lecturer (in 1825) of the American Academy, and Charles B. Shaw, Esq. on Perspective. To pay running expenses, each student was expected to subscribe $5.00. At the end of the season Mr. Morse addressed the students in the Chapel of Columbia College — the old building on Church Street, opposite Park Place, no longer standing — taking this opportunity to review the history of Academies of Art in Europe, "to show," as he himself said, "what constituted an Academy of Arts, and thus to dispel the prevailing erroneous impression of their nature." His definition was this: "An Academy of Arts is an Association of Artists for the purposes of Instruction and Exhibition." "We never saw an audience more fully gratified," comments the New York American for May 4, 1827.

Among the lecturers of the National Academy School in succeeding years was William Cullen Bryant, who read to the classes five lectures on mythology in December, 1827, which were repeated in 1828, 1829, and 1831. Cummings characterizes these lectures as follows: "Early history simplified — viewed with originality, and pronounced on and filled with a fervid poetic fire, that interested all."[1] Bryant's interest in the Academy of Design, of which he was an Honorary Member, is attested by two other facts: in 1848 he delivered a eulogy on Thomas Cole before the Academy; in

[1]Cummings, p. 125.

1865 he gave the inaugural address at the opening of the new building of the Academy on the corner of Twenty-third Street and Fourth Avenue.

In passing, we might note that the first course of lectures on the fine arts read in America was delivered by Samuel F. B. Morse before crowded and enthusiastic audiences at the New York Athenæum[1] and repeated to the students and academicians of the Academy of Design.

Two excerpts from Morse's letters to his parents in 1826 contain delightfully frank references to these lectures. The first, written on New Year's day, reads, "I am much engaged in my lectures, have completed two nearly; and hope to get through the four in season for my turn at the Athenæum. These lectures are of great importance to me, for if well done, they place me alone among the Artists, I being the only one who has as yet written a course of lectures in our country; time bestowed on them, therefore, is not misspent, for they will acquire me reputation which will yield wealth, as Mother I hope will live to see." The other, dated April 26th, reviews his accomplishment with becoming modesty but evident pleasure. "The pressure of my lectures became very great towards the close of them, and I was compelled to bend my whole attention to their completion. I did not expect, when I delivered my first, that I should be able to give more than two, but the importance of going through seemed greater as I advanced, and I was strengthened to

[1]This institution was established in 1824 and merged in the New York Historical Library in 1838. "Its object was to furnish opportunity for the highest culture, and to advance science, art and literature. It consisted of resident and honorary members, the former either associates, patrons, governors or subcribers; the funds were to be derived from the contributions of these four classes, $200 constituting a patron, $100 a governor, and lesser sums associates and subscribers. Its library was to comprise, when complete, all the standard elementary works of science and literature of every age and nation. Monthly lectures were open to both ladies and gentlemen." — Mrs. Lamb, History of the City of New York, Vol. II, p. 705.

accomplish the whole number; and, if I can judge from various indications, I think I have been successful. My audience (consisting of the most fashionable society in the city) regularly increased at each successive lecture, and at the last it was said that I had the largest audience ever assembled in the room."

As it has been the writer's privilege to read the manuscript of these lectures, which appear not to have been printed, a brief synopsis of them seems desirable here. The aim of the course, called The Affinity of Painting with the other Fine Arts, was to examine the claims of painting to a place among the fine arts. This was done in a thoroughly logical fashion. The fine arts were defined as those arts the principal aim of which is to please the imagination. The principles of nature on which the fine arts are based were discussed in detail in their application to each art. Painting was then discovered to have the same aim and to be subject to the same laws as the fine arts. Therefore its place among the fine arts was established.

Several incidents in the history of the Academy of Design are of special interest in the light of the more recent development of institutions of art. For example, it was announced in 1834 that "a School of Ornament for industrial art purposes would be added"[1] to the privileges offered by the Academy. This excellent opportunity, however, met with no response. It was left for Cooper Union twenty-five years later to develop this line of work. An art library was started in 1838, for the benefit of Academy members. In 1844 "was inaugurated a very highly proper, advantageous, educational measure — invitation to all Schools to visit the Exhibition. It was done by card, procurable on application." Three years later nearly six thousand pupils of the schools of the city were reported as availing themselves of this privilege,

[1]Cummings, p. 134.

not a bad showing for the size of the city, approximately four hundred thousand.

The National Academy since its organization in 1826 had rented various and sundry rooms for its schools and exhibitions. The need for a permanent home became increasingly evident. From 1849, when the Academy purchased the property, No. 663 Broadway, opposite Bond Street, known

THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN
TWENTY-THIRD STREET

as the "Brower's Stables", to 1865, when the first home of the Academy at the corner of Fourth Avenue and Twenty-third Street, its own building, was completed and occupied, the officers bent much of their energy to finding a desirable site and erecting a commodious and attractive building for the work of the Academy. Site after site was found unsuitable. For example, the lots on Twenty-fifth Street between Broadway and Fifth Avenue were "deemed too far uptown."

The desire to create in this new edifice a building that

should be beautiful as well as convenient led to the establishment in 1863 of a Fellowship to the National Academy. Thus the Academy for the first time made an appeal to the general public, and admitted to membership those not belonging to the fraternity of artists, but they avoided the fatal error of the American Academy by giving the Fellows no share in the management. By the plan, the Fellowship Fund should be "devoted to perfecting the building, sustaining the schools, and generally advancing the interest of the Academy." A subscriber of $100 was to be constituted a Fellow for Life and entitled to the following privileges: "ten season tickets to the Exhibition annually, access to the Library and Reading Rooms, and invitations to all Conversations held at the Academy; also to nominate two students, annually, who, on passing the usual examination, (should) be admitted to the school of the Academy, free of charge."

A description of this building, appended to the Historic Annals of the National Academy of Design, contains one vivid paragraph which is a sort of personally conducted tour. Surely no wayfaring man, however limited his intelligence, need err therein. It reads, "Visitors to the Galleries will enter at the main entrance in the first story. On the left of a person so entering, is the ticket office; on the right, the umbrella depository. Passing through the vestibule, the visitor enters the Great Hall; in front are the stairs leading to the Galleries above; four steps, the whole width of the hall, lead to a platform, where he gives up his ticket and buys his Catalogue; from this a double flight leads to another platform, from which a single flight reaches the level of the Gallery floor."[1]

The building was constructed from the plans of P. B. Wight as architect, who set before himself the task of creating a building that should be a revival of the Gothic style in archi-

[1]Cummings, p. 349.

tecture, adapted to the needs of the nineteenth century. The description states that all the carving was carefully studied from natural forms, the flowers and leaves of our woods and fields having furnished the models for all the sculpture, which was designed, under the direction of the architect, by the stone carvers who did the work.

With the most recent years of the history of the Academy of Design we may not deal; our concern is with events before 1870.

4. THE APOLLO ASSOCIATION

LATER CALLED THE AMERICAN ART UNION

To James Herring, a portrait painter, who at one time was Secretary of the American Academy of Fine Arts, the origin of the Apollo Association for the Promotion of the Fine Arts in the United States is due. He is best known, probably, for his publication, with James B. Longacre of Philadelphia, of the National Portrait Gallery of Distinguished Americans, a work noteworthy for its fine engravings of Jay, Jackson, Adams, and other public men, many of which A. B. Durand made. On the title-page is printed, "Under the superintendence of the American Academy of the Fine Arts." The arrangement was that a committee of the Academy should act as judges of the selection of subjects, the merits of paintings and engravings, and the literary excellence of the work, in order that it might be "appropriate, well-written, authentic, and national."[1] In return, all portraits and miniatures expressly painted for the National Portrait Gallery should be deposited in the Academy for the use of artists and students, proofs of all engravings should be framed and hung in the Director's room, and a copy of the work should be presented annually to the library.

[1] Keeper's Book, American Academy of the Fine Arts.

Herring opened the Apollo Gallery at 410 Broadway and exhibited therein the works of modern artists. A catalogue of the first fall exhibition (1838) makes the announcement that the Apollo Gallery is intended for the "mutual convenience of the Artists and the Public; to provide for the artists a suitable depot for the temporary exhibition of their works . . . and for the lovers of art a place of resort, where they may expect to find a rich variety of subjects for study or for sale." The price of admission was 25 cents; that of the catalogue, 12½ cents.

Having conceived the idea of establishing an association similar to The Edinburgh Association for the Promotion of Fine Arts in Scotland, Mr. Herring consulted several philanthropic friends of art, among them one long actively interested in the welfare of art, Dr. John W. Francis, earlier a professor of the anatomy of painting in the American Academy. In 1839 he became the first president of the Apollo Association. Among the later presidents we find Bryant's name for three years, from 1844 to 1846. This new organization was incorporated in 1840; in 1844 the Legislature changed its name to the American Art Union, the earlier name having been judged inappropriate and ill-advised. Under the new name it had great success and almost unprecedented influence.

The plan of the organization is stated in the Bulletin of the American Art Union as follows:

"Every subscriber of five dollars is a member of the Art Union for the year, and entitled to all its privileges.

"The money thus obtained, after paying necessary expenses, is applied,

"First — To the production of a large and costly Original Engraving from an American painting. Of this Engraving every member receives a copy for every five dollars paid by him.

JOHN W. FRANCIS, M. D.
FROM THE ENGRAVING BY JULIUS GALLMANN

"Second — To the purchase of Paintings and Sculpture, Statuettes in bronze, and Medals, by native or resident artists. These Works of Art are publicly exhibited at the Gallery of the Art-Union till the annual meeting in December, when they are publicly distributed by lot among the members, each member having one share for every five dollars paid by him.

"Third—The Institution keeps an office and free Picture Gallery, always open."

Conducted as the Union was by energetic merchants, it practically controlled the market for works of art. As the Art Bulletin of 1853 recorded, "The Art Union, in the management of its business, purchased its stock, advertised and exhibited its goods, employed its agents and clerks just like a merchant." In 1844 one of the prizes, The Voyage of Life, by Cole, painted for Samuel Ward, who died before it was completed, proved so tempting as to increase the number of subscribers from less than eight hundred to more than sixteen thousand. The attendance during that year was estimated as somewhat over half a million people.

If one would realize the scope of the Art Union, let him read the monthly Bulletin of the Union, published primarily as a vehicle of communication with the subscribers, but developing into a creditable journal devoted to the interests of art, containing news about American artists and exhibitions; biographies of artists, such as Paul Delaroche, John Constable and J. M. W. Turner; descriptions of the pictures purchased for distribution; reprints of articles found in foreign publications, for example, a paper by Mrs. Jameson, entitled Some Thoughts on Art; and book notices, among them a review of Ruskin's Seven Lamps of Architecture. Included in its pages were monthly instalments of a Biographical, Technological, and Topical Dictionary of Art, a series of lessons on The Art of Sketching from Nature, and several articles

on The Cities of Art and the Early Artists, in other words, on Italian Art.

But Nemesis, in the guise of "distinguished editorial hostility,"[1] as Cummings phrases it, was on the trail of so successful an organization. The distribution of paintings by a lottery was pronounced illegal. Accordingly we have the catalogue of the first (and also the last) annual sale of paint-

GALLERY OF THE ART UNION
FROM AN ENGRAVING AFTER THE DRAWING
BY Z. WALLIN

ings, December 15, 1853, with this explanatory note, "A competent legal tribunal having decided that the plan hitherto pursued of distributing works of art by lot was in conflict with the provisions of the Constitution, the committee have deemed it expedient to adopt a new medium of communication between the artist and the public."

To show the influence of the Art Union, despite its illegality, upon the progress of art, John Durand has gleaned the following facts: "In 1836 they (artists) could be counted on one's fingers; in 1851, when the Art Union fell under the

[1]Cummings, p. 149.

ban of the law, American artists formed a large body. The collection of paintings that was to have been distributed this year, and sold at auction in 1853 to close up the institution, numbered three hundred and ninety-five works, executed by over two hundred and fifty artists, most of them born on the soil. During the period of the Art Union's existence it distributed two thousand four hundred works, besides numerous original engravings. The institution, if not the creator of a taste for art in the community, disseminated a knowledge of it and largely stimulated its growth. Through it the people awoke to the fact that art was one of the forces of society."[1]

5. THE NEW YORK GALLERY OF THE FINE ARTS

This laudable attempt to open a permanent art gallery is inseparably connected with the name of Luman Reed, a successful merchant, and any account of its history should be prefaced by a statement of the debt New York owes to this generous benefactor, its first patron of the arts on a large scale, a most munificent patron for any country, whose influence upon the art movement, both by substantial encouragement of American artists and by the effect of his example upon wealthy men, it would be difficult to overestimate. Among the men enriched by his commissions and his friendship were A. B. Durand, Thomas Cole, and W. S. Mount. One incident may illustrate his kindly beneficence. When Cole showed Mr. Reed a painting for which he had given a commission, the merchant inquired the price. Cole answered, "I shall be satisfied if I receive $300; but I should be gratified if the price is fixed at $500." "You shall be gratified," replied his patron, and commissioned him to paint five more pictures at the same price.

[1] John Durand, Life and Times of A. B. Durand, p. 172.

LUMAN REED
AFTER THE PAINTING BY ASHER B. DURAND
FORMERLY IN THE NEW YORK GALLERY
NOW IN THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mr. Reed's own home, 13 Greenwich Street, was unique in that the third story was adapted in building for a picture gallery, and this was open one day each week to visitors, an innovation in his time. Another interesting experiment tried in the gallery was painting the doors in harmony with the general tone of color of the walls, which work was done by Cole, Mount, Flagg, and Durand. This room was a noted meeting-place for artists and literary men. Here Cooper, Irving, and Bryant associated with the American artists. To these meetings may well be attributed, in part, at least, the tone of purity and refinement, and the success of art in New York.

When soon after Mr. Reed's death it became necessary to settle his estate and dispose of his pictures, a number of his friends and beneficiaries, by a subscription among his business associates, easily raised $13,000 and purchased the entire collection. They next devised the plan of the New York Gallery of the Fine Arts. From Theodore Allen, Mr. Reed's son-in-law, came the suggestion; Jonathan Sturges, Mr. Reed's partner, himself a collector of American paintings, became its president; Thomas H. Faile was made treasurer. The two last named contributed the funds to begin the undertaking. Although in the list of trustees are the names of Thomas S. Cummings and William Cullen Bryant, most of the fifty trustees were wholesale grocers. On this account Mr. James Gordon Bennett, of the New York Herald, when approached for a favorable press notice, said bluntly, "Why, these people know more about pork and molasses than they do about art!"[1]

The organization was effected in 1844; the incorporation, in 1845. In the Constitution the following Sections are of especial interest:

"Its object is to establish in the city of New York a per-

[1]Durand, p. 128.

manent Gallery of Paintings, Statuary, and other Works of Art.

"The payment of one dollar, and the subscription of this Constitution shall constitute the person making such payment and subscription a member for life.

"Each member shall receive a certificate of membership, which shall entitle him to free admission to the Gallery for life, whenever it is open.

"The certificates of membership shall not be transferable,

CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE NEW YORK GALLERY

and all rights conferred thereby, shall attach solely to the person named therein, and shall expire with his life.

"The Trustess shall have no power either to create any debt or liability on the part of the Association; or to sell, exchange, or lend any of its works of art; or to do anything by which any of its property can be encumbered; or to impose any assessment on its members."

According to this clause, a work of art once in the possession of the Gallery must remain permanently in the collection.

For the first display of the paintings the National Academy of Design lent its large exhibition room at the corner of

Broadway and Leonard Street. The collection, although it contained some works by the Old Masters — a Fyt, two Morlands, an Annibale Carracci, and several paintings designated as Dutch, Flemish, or Italian School — showed a marked preponderance of paintings by American artists of Mr. Reed's own period. Among them we note Cole's series, The Course of Empire; portraits of American presidents, from life or from earlier portraits, by A. B. Durand; and twelve paintings by George W. Flagg, a nephew of Washington Allston, Mr. Reed's protégé, who was enabled to study abroad by Mr. Reed's generosity. Durand's Wrath of Peter Stuyvesant, which was in the collection, must have had in those days a secondary interest, in addition to that occasioned by its merit, for Stuyvesant was said to be a portrait of Luman Reed. The catalogue contained one hundred and seven entries. From its introduction we cull the following:

"A Gallery of Art in a city, is a source of refinement; nay, more, it is a stronghold of virtue. It opens a fountain of pure and improving pleasure to the stranger, to the idler, to the young, to our families, to our children. Call it a lounge, if you please; let it catch the idle hours or arrest the weary step; yet idling and relaxation here, can hardly fail to be improvement. Pictures of fair and spiritual beauty, forms of majestic virtue, portraitures of heroism and patriotism, shall lift the thoughts above their wonted range, to nobleness and sanctity."

Meantime the municipal corporation was asked to grant the use of the Rotunda,[1] a building erected in 1817 on city property at the northeast corner of the park, by John Vanderlyn for his panoramas, but now unoccupied. By dint of bribery, much lobbying, and speeches by the aldermen, who were duly coached for the occasion, the petition was granted,

[1]See p. 80.

on one condition, that the building should be vacated at any time on due notice. So in 1845 the gallery was duly established in its new quarters, which had been made over to suit its purpose. An advertisement in the New York Tribune for October 5th, 1846, reads thus:

"NEW YORK GALLERY of the Fine Arts — This institution, occupying the building known as the Rotunda in the Park, is open daily from 9 a. m. until dark. On Monday and Tuesday evenings the rooms are brilliantly lighted until 10 p. m.

Life membership one dollar. Single admission 25 cents. The Public Schools admitted free on Saturday by making arrangements with the doorkeeper."

For about three years the Rotunda was occupied, but even here the gallery was never successful financially. The Trustees had ten thousand certificates of membership printed in anticipation of a large demand, but with difficulty disposed of a thousand by sale or gift. When the Common Council ordered the Rotunda vacated, that the City might use it for certain public offices, the gallery was removed to the exhibition room of the National Academy of Design, where for several years — until 1854, at least — it was open to the public during the months between the Academy exhibitions. At length Messrs. Sturges and Faile, who furnished financial backing, became weary of making up a deficiency each year, and decided to close the affairs of the gallery. The valuable collection was placed in the care of the Historical Society in 1858.[1]

[1]See p. 38.

6. THE COOPER UNION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE AND ART

CHARTERED IN 1859.

The interest in this institution, as in the New York Gallery of Fine Arts, centers around the name of an individual, Peter Cooper, a man whose dominating purpose throughout his life was to provide free education for the working classes. This aim gripped his thought even in his young manhood when as an apprentice to a coachmaker his only capital consisted of good health, an eagerness to work, and those qualities of mind — a broad farsightedness and an extraordinary inventive capacity — that were so apparent in his later career. His own education was obtained from about six weeks' attendance at a country school and studying alone evenings by the light of a tallow dip in a barn lent him by his grandmother, Mrs. John Campbell, on her farm near City Hall. His life furnishes a remarkable instance of a youthful ambition that came to fulfilment. As means increased, his enthusiastic interest in the welfare of the skilled laborer did not diminish, but rather kept pace with his increasing ability. For fifty years he held tenaciously to his purpose; lot by lot he bought the property on which Cooper Union stands; some time before the actual construction of the building he purchased the material and stored it on the site.

In 1859 he founded the first institution in this country for the free education of the working classes. Students were admitted in the order of application, but everyone before his admission must state that he was obliged to earn a livelihood. Thus the institution was, and still is, safeguarded for the working classes. Mr. Cooper's high moral and even religious purpose in founding this institution and the unbounded pleasure he received from his act can be read in every line of

PETER COOPER
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH

his letter to the trustees accompanying the trust-deed, from which two paragraphs are quoted:

"My design is to establish this institution, in the hope that unnumbered youth will here receive the inspiration of truth in all its native power and beauty, and find in it a source of perpetual pleasure to spread its transforming influence throughout the world.

"Believing in and hoping for such result, I desire to make this institution contribute in every way to aid the efforts of youth to acquire useful knowledge, and to find and fill that place in this community where their capacity and talents can be usefully employed with the greatest possible advantage to themselves and the community in which they live."

By the trust-deed Peter Cooper and Sarah, his wife, who heartily concurred in his plans, conveyed to the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art the block of ground bounded northerly by Astor Place, easterly by Third Avenue, southerly by Seventh Street, and westerly by Fourth Avenue, with the building erected thereon, to be "forever devoted to the instruction and improvement of the inhabitants of the United States in practical science and art."

Among the objects to which the revenues of the corporation were to be devoted, as enumerated in the Charter, three especially concern us in tracing the history of the New York institutions of art, and these we shall quote and then discuss in order.

1. "Regular courses of instruction, at night, free to all who shall attend the same, under the general regulations of the trustees, on the application of science to the useful occupations of life, on social and political science, meaning thereby not merely the science of political economy, but the science and philosophy of a just and equitable form of government, based upon the fundamental law that nations and men should

do unto each other as they would be done by, and on such other branches of knowledge as in the opinion of the Board of Trustees will tend to improve and elevate the working classes of the city of New York."

Even from the early years of the institution, among the subjects taught in this artisans' night college have been drawing (architectural, mechanical, and free-hand), modeling, decorative designing, perspective, and studies from life. The course in art has always been elementary, as no previous training is required, but thorough. In 1910-11 there were eleven hundred and thirty-four pupils enrolled in the night art classes, with more than eleven hundred applicants kept on the waiting list through lack of accommodations. Such men of distinction as Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Frederick MacMonnies, among others, acquired their early education in these night classes.

II. "The support and maintenance of a free reading-room, of galleries of art, and of scientific collections, designed, in the opinion of the Board of Trustees, to improve and instruct those classes of the inhabitants of the city of New York whose occupations are such as to be calculated, in the opinion of the said Board of Trustees, to deprive them of proper recreation and instruction."

The suggestion of establishing a free gallery of art was acted on at once by the Trustees by assigning a suite of rooms for this object, and depositing therein the Bryan Gallery, and some other pictures lent by private individuals.

The first Annual Report, issued in 1860, announces:

"The Trustees would rejoice if an effort could be made to establish a permanent free gallery in the building, and in that event they would undertake to arrange the upper hall appropriately for its reception."

The Fifth Annual Report records that 164,343 visitors

entered the Gallery during the year, announces Mr. Bryan's gift of his collection to The New York Historical Society, and regrets that "the public will soon be compelled to go elsewhere in order to get admission to a free gallery of art." Again the Trustees suggest,

"Whoever will contribute to provide a permanent free gallery of art in this Institution will be doing a great service to the public, and entitle himself to be called the friend of the working classes, who, too poor to buy pictures, are created rich enough to take in all their beauty and worth."

III. "The maintenance of a school for the instruction of respectable females in the arts of design, and, in the discretion of the Board of Trustees, to afford to respectable females instruction in such other art or trade as will tend to furnish them suitable employment."

This special provision for "females" does not mean that women were excluded from any other course, for from the first all privileges were extended irrespective of sex; it does mean that a School of Design for Women, organized a year before the incorporation of Cooper Union by a private society for the purpose of giving art instruction at a moderate cost, but suffering from lack of means, was made an integral part of the new institution. To this department "amateurs" might be admitted for pay, so long as industrial pupils were not thereby excluded. This rule has become a dead letter; there is no chance for amateurs when so many pupils apply who cannot afford even a minimum payment. The benevolent ladies who established the earlier school became, under the new régime, an advisory council whose connection with the school has been very intimate and exceedingly valuable. Mrs. Abram S. Hewitt, a daughter of Peter Cooper, has been a member of this council for over fifty years, and Mrs. Joseph H. Choate for nearly half a century. Dr William Rimmer,

of Boston, was given sole charge of the school in 1866. His teaching was instructive through his remarkable knowledge of anatomy and inspiring through his own personality. His methods were unique, as was his reputation as a sculptor, for he executed nude statues without models. His own works, but six in number, are a Head of Saint Stephen, a Falling Gladiator, a granite statue of Alexander Hamilton, an Osiris, a Dying Centaur, and the Fighting Lions. After Dr. Rimmer's term of service, Mrs. Robert Carter was made Principal and had charge of the school for over twenty years. The later directors have been R. Swain Gifford and Frederick Dielman, both academicians of the National Academy of Design. The faculty has included many of the foremost American artists. One of the earlier reports gives an enrolment of two hundred women as students; the latest, three hundred and sixty-two, with over a hundred on the waiting-list.

Fortunately Peter Cooper was permitted during twenty-five years of serene old age to witness the results of his own beneficence and to hear words of grateful appreciation from the lips of many of his boys, the Cooper Union students. Until three days before his death, he gave his personal attention to the details of school supervision, visited the classes, attended the lectures, planned for future improvements, in short, lived for the institution he had founded. One of his plans, to use the roof of Cooper Union as a recreation ground and social center, has never been carried out; but that it was a workable scheme is proved by its successful operation in some of the New York public schools.

Another plan, in his mind from the first, was the establishment of a museum. This he frequently spoke of, but he saw no opportunity to accomplish his desire during his lifetime. In the letter accompanying the Trust Deed, from which we have already quoted, are found the following sentences: "In

order most effectually to aid and encourage the efforts of youth to obtain useful knowledge, I have provided the main floor of the large hall on the third story for a reading-room, literary exchange, and scientific collections. . . . And when a sufficient collection of the works of art, science, and nature can be obtained, I propose that glass cases shall be arranged around the walls of the gallery of the said room, forming alcoves around the entire floor for the preservation of the same."

The granddaughters of Peter Cooper, also believing that a museum is one of the most important parts of a scheme of instruction in art, in 1896 opened to the public a Museum for the Arts of Decoration, the first in America, intended not only for the scholars of the Day and Night Art Schools, but for artisans generally. The plan of this museum is not on the exact lines of Peter Cooper's thought; it is, however, in accord with his aim to benefit the working classes, for it deals with ornament as applied to all the trades. As one report states, "It is a working laboratory for the varied artistic trades, . . . an industrial art object reference alcove." The first steps towards this museum were taken as early as 1889 when Mr. and Mrs. Abram S. Hewitt presented a large collection of casts of the best French architectural and interior decorative motives as a nucleus for the coming Museum. Since then many friends of Cooper Union have helped most generously in adding to the collections.

The arrangement of the Museum is that of historical sequence, thus showing development of style. The space is divided into alcoves, each containing objects of a particular country and period. The labels are made simple and instructive. Encyclopedic scrap-books of pictures, photographs, drawings, color sketches, grouped historically and labeled clearly, furnish supplementary material. Other ways of making the collection of practical value have been success-

fully tried; lecturers and teachers have been permitted to bring classes for talks before the objects themselves, and duplicates in the collection have been lent to other smaller museums. In these various ways the Museum has proved helpful to those for whom it was specially designed, and through them to the community.

THE AMERICAN MUSEUM
FROM AN ENGRAVING BY SIDNEY L. SMITH
AFTER THE DRAWING BY A. J. DAVIS

INSTITUTIONS OF MINOR IMPORTANCE

Besides the incidents connected with the prominent organizations referred to above, there are certain other episodes in the history of art in New York of interest to the antiquarian, though they do not so vitally affect the progress of art. No complete account of these is either possible or desirable here, but a brief mention of a few may prove entertaining.

THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF JOHN SCUDDER. Scudder started life as an itinerant organ-grinder, and during his wanderings he collected the nucleus of his exhibit.[1] That

[1]Francis, Handbook of New York, 1853.

his museum became the successor, as it were, to the Tammany Museum, we have already learned. The exhibit was opened in 1810 at 21 Chatham Street, but was removed in 1816 to the west end of the New York Institution, where the Corporation had granted it free accommodation for ten years with the other scientific institutions of the city, for such it was rated in its day. Eight years later John Scudder built an edifice for his museum at the corner of Broadway and Ann Street, where the St. Paul Building now stands.

The best portion of his exhibit is advertised in A Concise Description of the City of New York, published in 1814:

"Scudder's Collection of Naval Paintings — The industrious proprietor of the Museum has also opened a very handsome collection of paintings, representative of the many recent victories which the U. S. have obtained over the British on the ocean. They are executed on an extensive scale, and are by no means destitute of merit. The second story of the Commercial building opposite the park is occupied for this exhibition. In the evening the apartment is brilliantly lighted, and the visitors are enlivened by music. The price of admittance is twenty-five cents." Perhaps its worst collection was noted by a frank English traveler who called the wax works contained therein "prodigies of absurdity and bad taste." One of Mr. Scudder's attractions was a band that played popular airs in an outer balcony to draw people within the doors; therefore Halleck's lines:

"And music ceases when it rains
"In Scudder's balcony."

Similar to the American Museum in aim and character, in other words, a commercial undertaking, was PEALE'S MUSEUM AND GALLERY OF THE FINE ARTS, sometimes known as the New York Museum, conducted by Reuben Peale from 1825 at 252 Broadway, opposite the park. The merits of this

CITY HALL PARK
SHOWING PEALE'S MUSEUM (TO THE LEFT) SCUDDER'S FIRST MUSEUM AND
THE ACADEMY OF ARTS (TO THE RIGHT)
FROM AN UNPUBLISHED WATER-COLOR DRAWING BY A. J. DAVIS, 1826
IN THE POSSESSION OF WILLIAM LORING ANDREWS

popular place of entertainment, where eight daily papers were provided for the use of the visitors,[1] are loudly heralded in the daily press. One announcement in particular attracts attention as perhaps the first time that Egyptian mummies were introduced to American society:

"EGYPTIAN MUMMIES — The scientific and curious are respectfully informed that the two Mummies lately received will be examined and partially unwrapped, by several of the most respectable physicians of this city at one o'clock on Friday, third instant, in the Lecture Room of Peale's Museum. N B. On this occasion, children cannot be admitted."[2] A subsequent account assures us that these respectable physicians treated the mummies with due courtesy.

Both these museums were absorbed by Phineas T. Barnum when in 1841 he became proprietor of the American Museum and continued at the corner of Broadway and Ann Street to provide varied kinds of entertainment from seeing General Tom Thumb, Jr., to hearing Jenny Lind. One advertisement in 1842 shows the wide range of these attractions, "Also exhibiting the facsimile of the great picture of CHRIST HEALING THE SICK IN THE TEMPLE, by Benjamin West, Esq., THE ALBINO LADY; and 500,000 curiosities." Barnum's museum was burned down July 13, 1865. He did not rebuild at the same place, and the site was taken by James Gordon Bennett for the publication of the New York Herald. In fact, the Herald was here published until 1893 when it removed to Herald Square.

BROWERE'S GALLERY OF BUSTS AND STATUES. This undertaking, while conducted for profit — the admittance was twenty-five cents — was apparently the expression of some-

[1]New York Evening Post, March 6, 1826.
[2]New York Evening Post, March 1, 1826.

what higher aims than either Scudder's or Peale's Museum. John I. Browere, a sign-painter who later became a portrait-painter and sculptor, had a studio in the rear of his residence, 315 Broadway, where he took the bust of many a gentleman of note. In his Gallery he is said to have been encouraged by Jefferson, Adams, Lafayette, and all the famous men of the day.[1] "The object of this institution," says a notice printed in 1828, "is to hand down to posterity the features and forms of American personages, as they actually were at the period of the execution of the likenesses by Mr. Browere. Among the number of his busts are the originals of Washington, Franklin, Paul Jones, and Jefferson by Houdon of France, who has been acknowledged the most eminent of his profession in Europe."[2]

OLD PAFF'S GALLERY. "Michael Paff, Esq., an industrious and successful collector of paintings,"[3] as Durand calls him, whose specialty was the Old Masters, opened a gallery in 1811 for the sale of paintings. He occupied at one time a part of the site of the present Astor House, 221 Broadway; at another, premises on Wall Street formerly occupied by the Custom House. In 1817 his collection was said to consist of upwards of three hundred original paintings and sketches and two thousand etchings and engravings. One of his advertisements offers great inducement for wholesale attendance, "A single admission, 25 cents. Subscribers, 3 dollars per annum; a lady and gentleman 4 dollars; and a whole family, 8 dollars for the same period."

This eccentric old picture dealer had ingenious ways of establishing the genuineness of his treasures. Perchance his tribe is not entirely extinct. For example, he is said to have

[1]Charles Burr Todd, In Olde New York, p. 36–37.

[2]A. T. Goodrich, Picture of N. Y. and Stranger's Guide to the Commercial Metropolis of the U. S.

[3]John Durand, Life and Times of A. B. Durand, p. 66.

claimed that a small Last Supper was by Michelangelo because the pavement of the room shown in the painting contained a row of stones equal in number to the letters of the name Buonarroti. He purchased for very small sums pictures that after cleaning and restoring sold for goodly amounts. What one day was only a landscape, artist unknown, was transformed the next day into a composition by Correggio, and blossomed the third day into a Van Dyck, duly cleaned and varnished, with a glass in front. Its price, meantime, had risen correspondingly.

JOHN VANDERLYN'S PANORAMAS IN THE ROTUNDA. The prominence of John Vanderlyn among early American artists gives sufficient reason for a rather full account of his unfortunate enterprise. In Europe, where he had traveled and studied, he had seen the success of panoramas and decided to avail himself of the current interest in them to exhibit in New York City one of Versailles. By way of preparation, he spent several months there making sketches, and after the peace of 1815 returned with them to New York. According to Wilson's Memorial History of New York, these were not the earliest productions of the sort in the city, for in 1795 a Panorama of London as seen from Blackfriar's Bridge was exhibited in Greenwich Street by William Winstanley, the English artist who painted it.[1]

In 1817 upon Vanderlyn's petition, the Corporation granted him the use for nine years with peppercorn rent of a lot of land on City Hall Park fronting on Chambers Street and adjacent to the east end of the New York Institution. On this he erected a building suitable for exhibition purposes, with the condition that at the end of nine years the structure

[1]In 1788 this kind of exhibition had been introduced to the public of Edinburgh by Robert Barker, and not till nine years later was the first panorama produced in Paris by our own countryman, Robert Fulton. — The Circus, p. 97.

was to become the property of the city. This building, erected by subscription, was known as the Rotunda, and was of circular form, fifty-three feet in diameter, and forty feet in height, with a Pantheon-shaped dome and a skylight. Here were exhibited panoramic views of the Palace and Garden of

THE ROTUNDA AND THE NEW YORK INSTITUTION
FROM A WOOD ENGRAVING BY C. BURTON

Versailles — Vanderlyn's own work — Paris, Athens, The City of Mexico, The City and Lake of Geneva, and The Battles of Waterloo, Lodi, and that at the gates of Paris. Here also were shown Vanderlyn's paintings, including his best works, the Marius among the Ruins of Carthage, which obtained for him in Paris the Napoleon Gold Medal, when twelve hundred paintings by European artists were exhibited, and which, it is stated, Napoleon wished to buy for the Louvre, and the Ariadne, now in the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts.

The records of the Common Council from 1817 to 1829 speak eloquently of the struggle John Vanderlyn was having to meet his financial obligations. As early as 1824 he had assigned the lease of the lot to the trustees of the subscribers, and they were petitioning for the right to turn the lease over to the Philharmonic Society,[1] who would pay them for the use of the building. This petition, however, was not granted. In 1829 during Vanderlyn's temporary absence from the city, the Corporation resorted to summary measures to remove him from the Rotunda, even though he petitioned for a renewal of the lease and several of the subscribers sent in a petition to the same effect.

At the time Vanderlyn was seeking a renewal of the lease he issued a circular entitled, To the Subscribers of the Rotunda, Friends and Patrons to the Liberal Arts, which puts his position plainly, if a bit plaintively. In fact, the wailing note occurs frequently in Vanderlyn's correspondence. Even when he was under contract with the American Academy and engaged at a stipulated salary, he gave frequent expression to his financial difficulties. His present complaint reads, "My plans were; however, thwarted by the unfortunate pecuniary embarrassments of the Rotunda, arising from the costs of the building exceeding so greatly the sum first estimated, and which was but then discovered, owing to mismanagement and misconduct of the agent. Eight thousand dollars was the calculation of the cost of the building. Had $10,000 sufficed (which sum has actually been paid towards it), there can be no doubt but that the Rotunda would have prospered. Had the small succor of a few hundred dollars been lent me at the critical period . . . there can be no doubt but that the institution would . . . ere this have

[1]The Philharmonic Society here referred to is not the present Philharmonic Society, as this was not founded until 1842, but an earlier organization that existed from 1824 to about 1828, when it was succeeded by the Musical Fund Society.

discharged the debts due on the building, and been in possession of a series of Panorama pictures, the merits of which had been fully tested by the distinguished approbation which had been bestowed upon them in London."

In May, 1830, an effort was made to procure again for Vanderlyn the use of the Rotunda. A petition to the Corporation signed by Cadwallader D. Colden, Richard Varick, John Ferguson, and other influential patrons urged a renewal of the lease and suggested that the creditors should receive a part of the exhibition receipts until their claims were met.

According to a pamphlet by a friend of Vanderlyn's, which he called by the inordinately long title, A Review of the Biographical Sketch of John Vanderlyn published by William Dunlap in his History of the Arts of Design with Some Additional Notices respecting Mr. Vanderlyn as an Artist, by a friend of the Artist, Mr. Vanderlyn had received every assurance from the mayor (in 1817) and influential members of the Board that an extension of the lease would be granted if the institution answered public expectation. The same authority records that a subsequent corporation finally settled with Vanderlyn for $3,000, payable in two equal instalments.

The Rotunda was fitted up in 1829 for the Court of Sessions and used later for the Marine Court. In 1834 the Naturalization Office was there. After the great fire of 1835, it became temporarily a post office, apparently until 1845, when, as will be recalled, the New York Gallery of the Fine Arts was permitted to occupy the building for a "rent of one dollar per year, during the pleasure of the Common Council." Thus the edifice reverted for about three years to a use similar to that for which it was built. Before July 31, 1848, however, the New York Gallery must have vacated the building, for then the Board of Aldermen appropriated two thousand dollars "for the purpose of defraying the expense of convert-

ing the building known as the Rotunda, in the Park, for public offices." The offices referred to were those of the Croton Aqueduct Board and the Almshouse Commissioner. At this time the Rotunda was much larger than Vanderlyn's original structure, for two-story extensions to the north and south had been added, the latter, called the propylaeum, having a portico and four Doric columns. Finally the removal of the Rotunda was included in the program laid out in 1870 by the new Board of Park Commissioners for the improvement of the parks.

THE OLD SKETCH CLUB OR THE XXI. The personnel of this club, established in 1829, another offshoot of the Drawing Association, included authors and men of science as well as artists. In 1831, for example, among its members were thirteen artists; several literary men, including Bryant, R. G. Sands, and John Howard Payne, best known as the writer of Home Sweet Home; and several whose sympathies were with literature and art, as Gulian C. Verplanck who, with Bryant and Sands, for three years edited The Talisman, an annual that furnished an outlet for the talent of the best writers, and Hamilton Fish, afterwards president of the New York Historical Society. Later the names of Luman Reed and Rev. Dr. Bellows, the pastor of All Souls' Church for forty-three years, were added. Of this membership John Durand says, "These men collectively may be styled the fountain head of the subsequent prosperity of local art. The start the (American) school (of art) obtained at this period is due to the men who belonged to this club."[1]

The Sketch Club, inaugurated at the suggestion of C. C. Ingham, who became its first president, was formed for three purposes:

1. "The encouragement of social and friendly feelings

[1]John Durand, Life and Times of A. B. Durand, pp. 97, 90.

among the members by occasional meetings." Every Friday evening the club met at one another's houses. Of these meetings notice was given in the newspapers in a form that mystified the uninitiated. For example, S. C.; S. F. B. M. meant that the Sketch Club met that evening with Samuel F. B. Morse.

II. "Mutual improvement in drawing." Each evening one hour was devoted to drawing on a subject assigned by the host, who was privileged to keep the sketches. One announcement reads, "The subject selected is the scene at the Fountain of Life in Boyuca, by the late Mr. Sands, vide 2d vol. Tales of the Glauber Spa. If preferred by any of the members, the opening scene of that story is also suggested."

III. "The production of an annual."

To prevent an extravagant rivalry in entertaining, the members agreed to limit the refreshments to dried fruit, crackers, milk, and honey. According to tradition, one evening a wealthy member violated the rule by setting before the club a supper. The members in protest declared they would eat standing and thus keep the letter of the law, as sitting down to supper was prohibited; but soon all forgot their scruples in the enjoyment of the hour.

Some amusing discussions of the Sketch Club have been recorded."[1] For example, Bryant upheld "as a sage notion that the perfection of bathing is to jump head-foremost into a snowbank," and the question, "Does heat expand the days in summer?" was debated with mock seriousness.

Out of this organization, in 1847, grew the Century Club, an offshoot, not a successor, a result of the difficulty of admission into the Sketch Club, which on that account was called The XXI.

[1] John Durand, Prehistoric Notes of the Century Club.

THE INTERNATIONAL ART UNION. This enterprise, begun in 1849 by Messrs. Goupil, Vibert & Co. at 289 Broadway, was conducted on a plan similar to that of the American Art Union, except that its purpose was to introduce "through the medium of a perpetual Free Gallery, the Chefs-d'oeuvre of the European School of Art," not the American. One new detail is given in the following quotation: "A sufficient sum will always be set apart for the purpose of sending one American student to Europe for the term of two years, at the expense of the International Art Union. Students of Art from any part of the Union may participate in a public exposition which will take place annually in the City of New York, from which the selection will be made for the term of study abroad." Like many another similar enterprise, this union was short-lived, closing its affairs in 1863.

THE DÜSSELDORF GALLERY. The Düsseldorf Gallery, established in 1849 in a hall over the Church of the Divine Unity in Broadway, between Spring and Prince Streets, was collected by Mr. John G. Boker, who resided in Düsseldorf, Germany, for twenty years, and then was Prussian Consul in New York. The gallery was so called because it was filled with the works of the Düsseldorf artists, a contemporary German school, who drew their inspiration from literature and history and painted with great exactitude of finish. Those here represented included Hasenclever, Schrödter, Camphausen, both Oswald and Andreas Achenbach, and Leutze, who from training and residence was a Düsseldorfian, though he is counted to-day as an American artist. Mr. Durand refers to the establishment of this gallery as the first appearance in New York of foreign art on a large scale, the beginning of what he terms "the eclipse of American art."[1] A catalogue of the collection, published in 1851 by William

[1] John Durand, Life and Times of A. B. Durand, p. 192.

C. Bryant & Co., contains most copious press notices regarding the different pictures. To indicate their style and character one quotation will suffice: "The picture of the highest aim here — The Adoration of the Magi, by Steinbruck — has the merit of being in conception and execution worthy of its subject and to say this is to say much. Too often do we see a sacred subject painfully profaned by the

THE DÜSSELDORF GALLERY
FROM A WOOD ENGRAVING IN THE COSMOPOLITAN ART ASSOCIATION BULLETIN, BY N. ORR

extravagance or imbecility of the artist, and even in the works of some of the great ones of the past, the imposing influence of a grand conception is not unfrequently weakened by the obtrusion of ludicrous anachronisms and degrading triviality. . . . The composition of Steinbruck's Adoration, its general purity and solemnity of tone, and its admirable management of light and shadow, raise it to high eminence in the lofty range of art to which it aspires. — Courier and Enquirer."

Elihu Vedder in his Digressions gives a somewhat different

impression of the value and use of the Düsseldorf Gallery. He says, "The Gallery had been called the 'Lovers' Tryst' from the fact that an indifferent public left 'the banquet hall deserted' or almost so, and that the pictures on projecting screens made secluded spots of which fond lovers soon availed themselves."

In June, 1857, an organization called The Cosmopolitan Art Association[1] purchased the Düsseldorf Collection for $180,000, and instituted free admission to the gallery for its members. This arrangement was not permanent, however. By 1859 the Düsseldorf Gallery is referred to as a separate institution, and in 1860 the Düsseldorf Gallery and Jarves Collection of Old Masters of the Italian School are advertised as attractions at the Institute of Fine Arts, 625 Broadway.

After over a decade of exhibition and sale this valuable col-

[1]The Cosmopolitan Art Association, an organization on the Art Union plan, having Sandusky, Ohio, as its headquarters, was founded in June, 1854, chartered in May, 1855, and, as the Cosmopolitan Art Journal of September, 1859, states, "has ever since been like the 'Thane of Cawdor, a prosperous gentleman.'" It combined the encouragement of the fine arts with the dissemination of wholesome literature, as each member was entitled to a subscription to one of several standard magazines as well as a ticket in the annual distribution of statuary and paintings. As with the American Art Union and the International Art Union, this association published a journal, of which the first issue announces grandiloquently, "It will be a Repository of Literary and Art News and Gossip — will contain Literary and Art Disquisitions, popularizing what is too abstruse, too learned for the majority of readers — will contain the *spirit* of American Art, as embodied in the Catalogues of the Art Galleries of the institution of which it is an exponent, in an extensive correspondence, in contributions from eminent and most worthy minds, in delineations from life and in pictures from nature — will become the patron of Taste, and seek by every laudable means to mould and direct that quality of heart and mind aright." This Association in its advertisements tries to disarm criticism by stating, "Those who understand the Plan and Objects of this Association cannot fail to see that the Institution is *not a lottery* in any usual, legal, or moral sense. We associate for the promotion of the Fine Arts on an entirely original plan. There is no game of chance; each Member receives *a full* equivalent in current literature, the net profit on which creates a fund with which choice Works of Art are purchased and distributed annually."

lection, numbering one hundred and seven pictures, was sold December 18, 1862, at an auction largely attended by artists and connoisseurs, and brought, it is said, about $45,000.

CRYSTAL PALACE EXHIBITION. This famous exhibition was held in 1853 in the Crystal Palace built at 42d Street and Sixth Avenue in imitation of the Crystal Palace in London and totally destroyed by fire five years later. To us the

THE CRYSTAL PALACE
FROM A COLORED LITHOGRAPH

building seems huge and ugly, but it seemed very grand to one person of the day at least. Mary L. Booth in her History of the City of New York describes it thus: "The fairy-like Greek cross of glass, bound together with withes of iron, with its graceful dome, its arched naves, and its broad aisles and galleries, filled with choice productions of art and manufactures gathered from the most distant parts of the earth — quaint old armor from the Tower of London, gossamer fabrics from the looms of Cashmere, Sèvres china, Gobelin tapestry, Indian curiosities, stuffs, jewelry, musical instruments, carriages and machinery of home and foreign manu-

facture, Marochetti's colossal equestrian statue of Washington, Kiss's Amazon, Thorwaldsen's Christ and the Apostles, Powers' Greek Slave, and a host of other works of art besides — will long be remembered as the most tasteful ornament that ever graced the metropolis."[1]

The collection of paintings and sculpture, numbering six hundred and seventy-five, though very creditable, did not receive the recognition it deserved, possibly because it was only a part of a larger exhibition. One editor of the day draws the following amusing comparison, suggested perhaps by the queer jumble of exhibits: "We grow sculptors as naturally as we grow Indian corn, and it is no wonder that a taste for their works should be indigenous." In an indirect way this apparently unappreciated exhibition affected the course of history of our Museum, for one man intimately connected with the inception of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Professor George F. Comfort, attributed to this exhibition his first impression of institutions of art and of the beauty and power of sculpture

In the Official Catalogue, among a host of names predominantly of the Düsseldorf School, are found works by Winterhalter, DeVries, Vernet, and Caroline Smith, a very few Americans, particularly W. S. Mount, and over twenty water colors by members of the New York Watercolor Society. One section of the catalogue contains works lent by Joseph Cristadoro, Esq., a truly imposing array of great names, such as Solomon and Jacob Ruysdael, David Teniers, Antonio Tempesta, Carlo Maratti, and Andrea del Sarto.

THE METROPOLITAN FAIR PICTURE GALLERY. This fair, held in the spring of 1864 at the Fourteenth Street Armory in aid of the United States Sanitary Commission, that is, for the benefit of the sick and wounded of the National Army, brought in over a million dollars. The plans for it were made

[1] Vol. VI, p. 752.

largely at the Union League Club, itself a child of the United States Sanitary Commission and its membership ardent and active supporters thereof. Among those who generously lent their artistic treasures are the names of W. T. Blodgett, A. M. Cozzens, John Taylor Johnston, R. M. Olyphant, Marshall O. Roberts, and Jonathan Sturges, men who owned private collections largely American in character. The cata-

THE METROPOLITAN SANITARY FAIR BUILDINGS
FROM A WOOD ENGRAVING

logue of paintings to be sold there at auction has one hundred and ninety-six numbers, while the complete catalogue of the art exhibition includes three hundred and sixty works of art. These catalogues illustrate the interest in modern European art which had been developing side by side with the patronage of American art. About one-third of the artists represented were modern European artists, for example, Bouguereau, Breton, Couture, Gerome, Meissonier, Rousseau, and Troyon. The Committee of the Fine Arts contains among others the following familiar names: Mrs. Jonathan Sturges, Mr. and Mrs. William T. Blodgett, A. M. Cozzens, Marshall O.

Roberts, E. Leutze, W. Whittredge, and Daniel Huntington.

With the Metropolitan Fair Gallery this account of the history of art in New York before the establishment of The Metropolitan Museum of Art may well end, for this fair with its thousands of surprised and delighted visitors, evidenced to many people "the need, desirableness, and practicability of a permanent and free gallery of art." The statement in Henry T. Tuckerman's Book of the Artists, which was copyrighted in 1867, may stand for a contemporaneous opinion of the status of art.

"Within the last few years the advance of public taste and the increased recognition of art in this country, have been among the most interesting phenomena of the times. A score of eminent and original landscape painters have achieved the highest reputations; private collections of pictures have become a new social attraction [to the collectors already mentioned might be added the names of Robert Hoe, later a patron of the Museum, and James Lenox and R. L. Stuart, whose collections are now in the New York Public Library]; exhibitions of works of art have grown lucrative and popular; buildings expressly for studios have been erected; sales of pictures by auction have produced unprecedented sums of money; art shops are a delectable feature of Broadway; artist-receptions are favorite reunions of the winter; and a splendid edifice has been completed devoted to the Academy, and owing its erection to public munificence — while a school of design is in successful operation at the Cooper Institute. Nor is this all; at Rome, Paris, Florence, and Düsseldorf, as well as at Chicago, Albany, Buffalo, Philadelphia, Boston, and New York, there are native *ateliers*, schools, or collections, the fame whereof has raised our national character and en-

hanced our intellectual resources as a people. These and many other facts indicate too plainly to be mistaken, that the time has come to establish permanent and standard galleries of art, on the most liberal scale, in our large cities."[1]

[1]H. T. Tuckerman, Book of the Artists, pp. 11, 12.

CHAPTER I

THE PERIOD OF ORGANIZATION

1869–1871

JOHN TAYLOR JOHNSTON
FROM THE PAINTING BY
LÉON JOSEPH FLORENTIN BONNAT

CHAPTER I

THE PERIOD OF ORGANIZATION

1869–1871

THE introductory chapter has given ample proof that by the end of the Civil War the time for the establishment of a permanent gallery of art in New York had fully come and that the people of culture were united in their recognition of this fact, though they might differ as to the practicable means to secure the desired end. For example, The New York Historical Society wished to utilize for that purpose the Arsenal in the Park, while the editor of the Evening Post, on January 17, 1867, in an article entitled A Free Gallery for New York, laid the burden of responsibility for such an undertaking upon the National Academy of Design, then occupying its Fourth Avenue building.

At this juncture John Jay, a man ceaseless in good works, best known at this time perhaps by his active opposition to slavery, gave an address before a company of Americans at a Fourth of July dinner in Paris in 1866 that was destined to initiate the Museum movement. The London Times of July 7, 1866, in a letter from Paris gives the following pleasing account of this significant occasion:

"The 90th anniversary of the National Independence of the United States was celebrated on Wednesday at the Pré Catalan. The fête was organized through the active agency of some patriotic gentlemen. The usual attractions of the Pré Catalan were much increased by a generous contri-

bution of plants and flowers by the Prefect of the Seine from the city conservatories. Large tents were arranged for the accommodation of those present — one for dancing, two for refreshments, and one as a *vestiaire*. They were profusely decorated with American and French flags united in *faisceaux*, and in the dancing-tent were suspended portraits of Washington and of the Emperor of the French. Among the invited guests were Mr. Bigelow, Minister of the United States, and his family; Mr. Fox, Assistant Secretary of War; Captain Beaumont (of the Monitor Miantonomoh, now lying at Cherbourg) together with several of his officers; Mr. N. M. Beckwith, U. S. Commissioner to the Universal Exhibition of 1867; the Rev. Drs. Hitchcock, Thompson (of the Broadway Tabernacle), Eldridge, Cummins, Davenport, and Smith. . . . Refreshments of various kinds were furnished during the afternoon and at half-past 5 o'clock a repast was laid out in the refreshment-tent, after which the chairman of the committee, Mr. Tucker, in a few pertinent observations, reminded his countrymen present of the character of the day which they had assembled to celebrate, and called upon Mr. John Jay, of New York, for an address. This was responded to, that gentleman delivering a lively and amusing speech on 'the American invasion of the Old World'."

Mr. Jay, in a letter to General Cesnola, dated August 30, 1890, gives a more definite statement of his words and their immediate result. "The simple suggestion that 'it was time for the American people to lay the foundation of a National Institution and Gallery of Art and that the American gentlemen then in Europe were the men to inaugurate the plan' commended itself to a number of the gentlemen present, who formed themselves into a committee for inaugurating the movement." This committee subsequently addressed a memorial to the Union League Club of New York, urging the

importance of early measures "for the foundation of a permanent national gallery of art and museum of historical relics, in which works of high character in painting and sculpture and valuable historical memorials might be collected, properly displayed, and safely preserved for the benefit of the people at large," and suggesting that the Union League Club might "properly institute the best means for promoting this great object."[1]

Meantime Mr. Jay had come home and had been elected President of the Union League Club. Therefore the letter prompted by his suggestion came up for his own official notice. At a meeting of the club, it was referred to its Art Committee, which at this time consisted of George P. Putnam, the founder of G. P. Putnam & Sons; John F. Kensett, well-known as a landscape painter; J. Q. A. Ward, whose statues have a deservedly high place in New York, for example, his Indian Hunter and Pilgrim in Central Park, his Henry Ward Beecher in Brooklyn, his colossal statue of Washington on the steps of the Sub-Treasury Building, and the statues in the pediment of the New York Stock Exchange; Worthington Whittredge, a painter of landscapes, whose Evening in the Woods in the Museum collection may be considered characteristic of his forest interiors; George A. Baker, among the best portrait painters of his time, who often exhibited at the Academy Exhibitions; Vincent Colyer, who painted in New York until the war, and at its close settled in Darien, Connecticut; and Samuel P. Avery, who as art dealer and collector had a large experience in the world of art, and whose untiring devotion to the Museum through many subsequent years it will be our pleasure to record in these pages.

These gentlemen, so well fitted for their task, although, as they themselves acknowledged, at first sight "disposed to think that their legitimate duties were bounded by the walls

[1] A Metropolitan Art-Museum in the City of New York, N. Y., 1869, p. 3.

of the club,"[1] gave to the problem their serious attention. At a meeting of the Club, held October 14, 1869, they reported at length, recommending an early meeting to which members of the club and such of their friends as might be interested in the subject should be invited and at which Prof. George F. Comfort of Princeton had consented to speak. The object of this gathering should be "simply to introduce the subject and to elicit a free expression of opinion in regard to the expediency of further action, and as to what shape it should take."[2] This report, which was adopted and carried into action, contains a discussion of ways and means from which we quote the following sentences:

"It will be said that it would be folly to depend upon our governments, either municipal or national, for judicious support or control in such an institution; for our governments, as a rule, are utterly incompetent for the task. On the other hand, to place the sole control of such efforts in the hands of any body of artists alone, or even in the National Academy, might not be wise. Neither would an institution be likely to meet the requirements if founded solely by any one individual, however ample might be the provision in money — for it would probably prove sadly deficient in other things.

. . . .

"An amply endowed, thoroughly constructed art institution, free alike from bungling government officials and from the control of a single individual, whose mistaken and untrained zeal may lead to superficial attempts and certain failures; an institution which will command the confidence of judicious friends of art, and especially of those who have means to strengthen and increase its value to the city and to the nation, is surely worth consideration in a club like this."[3]

[1] A Metropolitan Art-Museum in the City of New York, p. 3.
[2] Ibid, p. 6.
[3] Ibid, p. 5.

The Honorable John Jay, as he had become by his appointment as ambassador to Austria, had meantime gone to his post in Vienna, and so could not participate actively in the proceedings. He was created an Honorary Fellow for Life in 1888, as a recognition of his having suggested the movement for the establishment of the Museum.

The work of the Art Committee of the Union League Club was but just begun when it had rendered its report to the Club. An active month was spent in preparing for the meeting to be held November 23, 1869, in the Theatre of the Club on Twenty-sixth Street. Invitations were sent to the members of the Union League Club, the National Academy of Design and other artists, the Institute of Architects, the New York Historical Society, the Century, Manhattan, and other clubs, and to citizens who might take an interest in the project. Prominent men were asked to act as officers on this occasion, that the undertaking might be favorably launched. The Committee wisely strove in all these preliminaries that the gathering should be recognized as a meeting not "of any one club, or society, or party, or organization of any kind", but "composed of representatives of the various bodies connected with art, and of other citizens interested in the subject," as George P. Putnam took pains to say on that eventful evening.

Of this first gathering it is recorded that a large number were present — one New York newspaper says "some three hundred gentlemen" — even though the weather prevented "many earnest friends of the object from attending." So early in the history of the Museum do we come upon what we now term "Museum weather." To the natural query as to who were present, The New York Times gives the following answer: "There was a large representation of artists, editors, architects, lawyers, merchants, and others present. Among

the artists were Church, Bierstadt, H. P. Gray, Stone, Cranch, Kensett, Lang, Swain, Gifford, F. A. Tait, Walter Brown, Wm. Hart, Le Clear, Rogers, Shattuck, Hayes, McEntee, Wengler, Perry, Bristol, Paige, and many others. Among other prominent gentlemen present were Rev. Dr. Bellows, Richard Upjohn, Mr. Mould, Richard Grant White, Chas. F. Briggs, James Brooks, Rev. Dr. Thompson, Judge Peabody, and others."

The following gentlemen acted as officers of the meeting:

PRESIDENT

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

VICE PRESIDENTS

DANIEL HUNTINGTON, of the National Academy of Design.

R. M. HUNT, President of the N. Y. Chapter of the Institute of Architects.

ANDREW H. GREEN, Comptroller of the Central Park.

WM. J. HOPPIN, of the New York Historical Society.

HENRY W. BELLOWS, D. D., of the Century Club.

F. A. P. BARNARD, LL. D., President of Columbia College.

HENRY G. STEBBINS, President Central Park Commission.

MARSHALL O. ROBERTS, Union League Club.

WM. E. DODGE, JR., President Young Men's Christian Association.

SECRETARIES

S. P. AVERY, Secretary of the Art Committee, Union League Club.

A. J. BLOOR, Secretary of the New York Chapter, Institute of Architects.

JOHN JAY

FROM THE PAINTING BY JARED B. FLAGG

THE PROPERTY OF THE UNION LEAGUE CLUB

Of this noteworthy group of men, but one survives to-day, Alfred J. Bloor. He has said, "Well I remember the 'sea of upturned faces' and the applause that greeted the venerable poet and publicist as he rose to address the audience, as well as the dead silence that followed when he opened his lips to speak."[1] Any person who reads the art history of New York even casually must recognize the appropriateness of the selection of William Cullen Bryant as presiding officer, one who held the confidence, esteem, and love both of the artists and of the community, who possessed the advantage of being intimately connected with the entire art movement and yet not belonging to the fraternity of artists, hence representing not a single group of men, but the great body of people in New York. The New York Evening Mail referred to this happy choice in an editorial as follows: "It was fitting that the Nestor of our poets and journalists — long may his vigor remain unimpaired, as it is at present — who has been the counsellor, adviser, and promoter of all projects for the encouragement of American art; who assisted at the birth and has sedulously aided the whole growth of our art, and whose name is a tower of strength for any enterprise — should take the lead in a movement which promises so nobly."

The other officers of the evening were men of varied occupation, but common interest in the highest good of their fellow-men, chosen to represent the organizations with which they were officially connected. Mr. Bryant on taking the chair introduced the subject in an address worthy to be copied here:

"We are assembled, my friends, to consider the subject of founding in this city a Museum of Art, a repository of the productions of artists of every class, which shall be in some

[1]Address read at the inaugural ceremonies at the Syracuse Museum.

measure worthy of this great metropolis and of the wide empire of which New York is the commercial center. I understand that no rivalry with any other project is contemplated, no competition, save with similar institutions in other countries, and then only such modest competition as a Museum in its infancy may aspire to hold with those which were founded centuries ago, and are enriched with the additions made by the munificence of successive generations. No precise method of reaching this result has been determined on, but the object of the present meeting is to awaken the public, so far as such a meeting can influence the general mind, to the importance of taking early and effectual measures for founding such a museum as I have described.

"Our city is the third great city of the civilized world. Our republic has already taken its place among the great powers of the earth; it is great in extent, great in population, great in the activity and enterprise of her people. It is the richest nation in the world, if paying off an enormous national debt with a rapidity unexampled in history be any proof of riches; the richest in the world, if contented submission to heavy taxation be a sign of wealth; the richest in the world, if quietly to allow itself to be annually plundered of immense sums by men who seek public stations for their individual profit be a token of public prosperity. My friends, if a tenth part of what is every year stolen from us in this way, in the city where we live, under pretence of the public service, and poured profusely into the coffers of political rogues, were expended on a Museum of Art, we might have, reposited in spacious and stately buildings, collections formed of works left by the world's greatest artists, which would be the pride of our country. We might have an annual revenue which would bring to the Museum every stray statue and picture of merit for which there should be no ready sale to individuals, every smaller collection in the country which its owner could

no longer conveniently keep, every noble work by the artists of former ages, which by any casualty, after long remaining on the walls of some ancient building, should be again thrown upon the world.

"But what have we done — numerous as our people are, and so rich as to be contentedly cheated and plundered, what have we done toward founding such a repository? We have hardly made a step toward it. Yet, beyond the sea there is the little kingdom of Saxony, which, with an area less than that of Massachusetts, and a population but little larger, possesses a Museum of the Fine Arts marvellously rich, which no man who visits the continent of Europe is willing to own that he has not seen. There is Spain, a third-rate power of Europe and poor besides, with a Museum of Fine Arts at her capital, the opulence and extent of which absolutely bewilder the visitor. I will not speak of France or of England, conquering nations, which have gathered their treasures of art in part from regions overrun by their armies; nor yet of Italy, the fortunate inheritor of so many glorious productions of her own artists. But there are Holland and Belgium, kingdoms almost too small to be heeded by the greater powers of Europe in the consultations which decide the destinies of nations, and these little kingdoms have their public collections of art, the resort of admiring visitors from all parts of the civilized world.

"But in our country, when the owner of a private gallery of art desires to leave his treasures where they can be seen by the public, he looks in vain for any institution to which he can send them. A public-spirited citizen desires to employ a favorite artist upon some great historical picture; here are no walls on which it can hang in the public sight. A large collection of works of art, made at great cost, and with great pains, gathered perhaps during a life-time, is for sale in Europe. We may find here men willing to contribute to

purchase it, but if it should be brought to our country there is no edifice here to give it hospitality.

"In 1857, during a visit to Spain, I found in Madrid a rich private collection of pictures, made by Medraza, an aged painter, during a long life, and at a period when frequent social and political changes in that country dismantled many palaces of the old nobility of the works of art which adorned them. In that collection were many pictures by the illustrious elder artists of Italy, Spain, and Holland. The whole might have been bought for half its value, but if it had been brought over to our country, we had no gallery to hold it. The same year I stood in the famous Campana Collection of marbles, at Rome, which was then waiting for a purchaser — a noble collection, busts and statues of the ancient philosophers, orators, and poets, the majestic forms of Roman senators, the deities of ancient mythology,

'The fair humanities of old religion,'

but if they had been purchased by our countrymen and landed here, we should have been obliged to leave them in boxes, just as they were packed.

"Moreover, we require an extensive public gallery to contain the greater works of our painters and sculptors. The American soil is prolific of artists. The fine arts blossom not only in the populous regions of our country, but even in its solitary places. Go where you will, into whatever museum of art in the old world, you will find there artists from the new, contemplating or copying the masterpieces of art which they contain. Our artists swarm in Italy. When I was last at Rome, two years since, I found the number of American artists residing there as two to one compared with those from the British isles. But there are beginners among us who have not the means of resorting to distant countries for that instruction in art which is derived from carefully study-

ing works of acknowledged excellence. For these a gallery is needed at home, which shall vie with those abroad, if not in the multitude, yet in the merit, of the works it contains.

"Yet further, it is unfortunate for our artists, our painters especially, that they too often find their genius cramped by the narrow space in which it is constrained to exert itself. It is like a bird in a cage which can only take short flights from one perch to another and longs to stretch its wings in an ampler atmosphere. Producing works for private dwellings, our painters are for the most part obliged to confine themselves to cabinet pictures, and have little opportunity for that larger treatment of important subjects which a greater breadth of canvas would allow them and by which the higher and nobler triumphs of their art have been achieved.

"There is yet another view of the subject, and a most important one. When I consider, my friends, the prospect which opens before this great mart of the western world, I am moved by feelings which I feel it somewhat difficult to clearly define. The growth of our city is already w nderfully rapid; it is every day spreading itself into the surrounding region, and overwhelming it like an inundation. Now that our great railway has been laid from the Atlantic to the Pacific, Eastern Asia and Western Europe will shake hands over our republic. New York will be the mart from which Europe will receive a large proportion of the products of China, and will become not only a center of commerce for the New World, but for that region which is to Europe the most remote part of the Old. A new impulse will be given to the growth of our city, which I cannot contemplate without an emotion akin to dismay. Men will flock in greater numbers than ever before to plant themselves on a spot so favorable to the exchange of commodities between distant regions; and here will be an aggregation of human life, a concentration of all that ennobles and all that degrades humanity, on a scale

which the imagination cannot venture to measure. To great cities resort not only all that is eminent in talent, all that is splendid in genius, and all that is active in philanthropy; but also all that is most dexterous in villany, and all that is most foul in guilt. It is in the labyrinths of such mighty and crowded populations that crime finds its safest lurking-places; it is there that vice spreads its most seductive and fatal snares, and sin is pampered and festers and spreads its contagion in the greatest security.

"My friends, it is important that we should encounter the temptations to vice in this great and too rapidly growing capital by attractive entertainments of an innocent and improving character. We have libraries and reading-rooms, and this is well; we have also spacious halls for musical entertainments, and that also is well; but there are times when we do not care to read and are satiate with listening to sweet sounds, and when we more willingly contemplate works of art. It is the business of the true philanthropist to find means of gratifying this preference. We must be beforehand with vice in our arrangements for all that gives grace and cheerfulness to society. The influence of works of art is wholesome, ennobling, instructive. Besides the cultivation of the sense of beauty — in other words, the perception of order, symmetry, proportion of parts, which is of near kindred to the moral sentiments — the intelligent contemplation of a great gallery of works of art is a lesson in history, a lesson in biography, a lesson in the antiquities of different countries. Half our knowledge of the customs and modes of life among the ancient Greeks and Romans is derived from the remains of ancient art.

"Let it be remembered to the honor of art that if it has ever been perverted to the purpose of vice, it has only been at the bidding of some corrupt court or at the desire of some opulent and powerful voluptuary whose word was law.

When intended for the general eye no such stain rests on the works of art. Let me close with an anecdote of the influence of a well-known work. I was once speaking to the poet Rogers in commendation of the painting of Ary Scheffer, entitled Christ the Consoler. 'I have an engraving of it,' he answered, 'hanging at my bedside, where it meets my eye every morning.' The aged poet, over whom already impended the shadow that shrouds the entrance to the next world, found his morning meditations guided by that work to the Founder of our religion."

The next speaker was Professor George Fiske Comfort of Princeton, who though but a young man, had already devoted six years continuously to study in Europe of the conditions of art and the nature of the art institutions there. So he was able to speak with authority of the relation of art to civilization, to emphasize the importance of establishing a museum of art, and to indicate what in his opinion should be the character of the exhibits, the policy as to arrangement, and the methods of administration. It is a noteworthy fact that there can be cited scarcely any plan of museum work that has been adopted during the last forty years which was not at least referred to in this comprehensive address. Loan exhibitions, a department of decorative arts, the fitting up of lecture rooms and the giving of lectures for the general public, the work with school children, the great opportunity that a museum has to enrich the lives of the poor; — all these and other features of museum work were outlined in a clear and scholarly way. Even the desirability of keeping General Cesnola's Cypriote collection in America was suggested. The concluding paragraph won enthusiastic applause:

"In the year 1776 this nation declared her political independence of Europe. The provincial relation was then severed as regards politics; may we not now begin insti-

tutions that by the year 1876 shall sever the provincial relation of America to Europe in respect to Art?"[1]

Mr. Bryant then called on other gentlemen present, who responded with words of approval and sympathetic support. Richard M. Hunt, as a member of the American Institute of Architects, pledged the help of that body in erecting the necessary building and told of their efforts toward establishing a museum, as follows:

"The Society of Architects has already been endeavoring to fill up this gap, that everyone seems now to take such interest in. We commenced some ten years ago with the idea of establishing a National Museum, but after a trial of several years it was found to be impracticable. And now, within the last year or eighteen months, we have commenced the formation of the Architectural Library of the City of New York. That is the title; but it is our aim to have, at no very future period, a museum similar to the Kensington Museum in London. And although our means are not coming forward as fast as we could wish, we are in hopes soon to have some place where we may gather one of the great features that now exists in the Kensington Museum — a Loan Collection of Works of Art.

. . . . . .

"Every day it becomes harder and harder to get hold of the chefs-d'œuvre of antiquity, or even of modern times. A few years ago, the Campana Collection was sold. My brother and I felt what an immense advantage it would be to have the collection in this city, and we endeavored then to get gentlemen to purchase the collection. . . . If that had been accomplished, we should have had the commencement of a museum similar to those that are now being formed in most of the countries of Europe."

When Russell Sturgis, Jr., then only a beginner in the field

[1] This address may be read in Old and New, under the title of Art Museums of America.

of art, later so distinguished in his chosen branch tecture, was called upon to speak, he also emphasi valuable opportunities f [illegible] ing collections of ar[illegible] at were slipping by.

The Honor[illegible] Henry G. Stebbins proffered earnest sympathy fror [illegible] ntral Park Commission as individuals and as a com[illegible]n and a promise to do their utmost to promote the obje[illegible].

The [illegible]. Dr. Joseph P. Thompson of the Broadway Taberna[illegible], whose words were greeted with great applause, expressed himself as seeing in "the very grandeur of the scale" on which this movement was projected "an element of success." He closed with this wish: "I long for the day when I can unite with my friend Dr. Bellows, and all men throughout this city who are ever called to lift their hands in benediction, and stand hand in hand, with our hands uplifted toward Heaven, and invoke our benediction on the corner-stone of this Museum of Art, which will also be a museum of Virtue, a museum of Purity, and a museum of Goodness and Truth."

C. C. Cole, brother of Henry Cole, then Superintendent of the South Kensington Museum, gave as his suggestion that especial emphasis should be placed upon the Loan Collection, which from the very first had proved "the very back-bone of the South Kensington Museum.'

The Rev. Dr. Bellows of All Souls' Church was then "loudly called for," the account says, and his enthusiastic attitude won heartiest applause. Some of his statements, then perhaps deemed extravagant, deserve repetition because of the literal way in which they have been carried out. For example, "I have not been in the least degree discouraged by the objections that have been raised here in reference to the difficulty of supplying a Museum of the best productions of Art. . . . Who is to say when we, through the redun-

wealth with which our prosperity threatens to possess . . . be able to outbid the world in a . . . market for those great recondite works of Art, . . . are necessary to the cultivation of every people? . . . can say . . . w soon we may find ourselves the largest and the safest . . . rs for the custody and protection of the highest of all . . . e world?"

William J. Hoppin, Marshall O. Roberts, W. . . . dge, Jr., and George William Curtis, who for various re. . .ons found themselves unable to be present, sent letters of g . . wishes, which were read. Mr. Hoppin urged coöperation with the Historical Society, the possessors of a valuable nucleus for the proposed collection, and laid special stress upon one point, that the Museum "must be built and mainly supported by the taxpayers of the City of New York," thus being a public institution kept up by public funds.

In the words of a newspaper writer of the day, "unmistakable enthusiasm and evidence of purpose marked the entire proceedings." The immediate results of this first public meeting were principally two: awakening public interest — a most necessary step in any undertaking — and placing the responsibility for the movement definitely upon a Provisional Committee, a group of representative men, fifty in number, who were interested in art. The last result was accomplished by the adoption of the following resolutions:

"RESOLVED:

"I. That in the opinion of this meeting, it is expedient and highly desirable that efficient and judicious measures should at once be initiated with reference to the establishment in this city of a MUSEUM OF ART, on a scale worthy of this metropolis and of a great nation.

"II. That a Committee of citizens, properly representing the various organizations and individuals directly or indirectly interested in the object, should at once be appointed;

and that to them the whole subject should be referred, with power to fill vacancies in the Committee and to add to their numbers; to appoint sub-committees; to prepare a constitution and by-laws; to apply for a charter, and to adopt such measures as they may find expedient for the accomplishment of the above-named object.

"III. RESOLVED, That the appointment of fifty gentlemen, as hereinafter named, to serve on such Committee, would be, in our opinion, satisfactory to the whole community; and we hereby respectfully request the gentlemen named to take the objects of this meeting into their own hands, and to carry them to successful completion by all such means as they may deem expedient.

"IV. That the Secretaries of this meeting be requested to notify the gentlemen thus designated, and to call an early meeting of this Provisional Committee, viz.:

WILLIAM H. ASPINWALL
W. L. ANDREWS
S. L. M. BARLOW
WILLIAM T. BLODGETT
WALTER BROWN
CHARLES BUTLER
RICHARD BUTLER
LEGRAND B. CANNON
JOSEPH H. CHOATE
F. E. CHURCH
JAMES B. COLGATE
GEORGE F. COMFORT
GEORGE WM. CURTIS
GEN. JOHN A. DIX
C. E. DETMOLD
WM. E. DODGE, JR.
BENJ. H. FIELD
S. R. GIFFORD
ROBERT GORDON
ANDREW H. GREEN
GEORGE GRISWOLD
JOHN H. HALL
ROBERT HOE, JR.
WM. J. HOPPIN
D. HUNTINGTON
RICHARD M. HUNT
JOHN TAYLOR JOHNSTON
ROBERT LENOX KENNEDY
JOHN LAFARGE
A. A. LOW
JAMES LENOX
HENRY G. MARQUAND
FRED. LAW OLMSTED
R. M. OLYPHANT

HOWARD POTTER
W. C. PRIME
PROF. O. M. ROOD
MARSHALL O. ROBERTS
HENRY G. STEBBINS
ALEX. T. STEWART
D. JACKSON STEWART
ROBERT L. STUART
ANSON P. STOKES
JONATHAN STURGES
RUSSELL STURGIS, JR.
RUTHERFURD STUYVESANT
LUCIUS TUCKERMAN
GEN. F. L. VINTON
CALVERT VAUX
GEORGE M. VANDERLIP
SAMUEL GRAY WARD
THEODORE WESTON."

Fortunately Alfred J. Bloor remembers what happened that same evening after the public meeting. "I recall," says he, . . . "the supper (still under the roof of the hospitable Union League Club) which followed the formal endorsement of the preliminary labors of the months beforehand. The supper party consisted of twelve, thus escaping by only one the unlucky number. The participants consisted of Mr. Bryant, who occupied the head of the table; Mr. Putnam, Mr. Avery, Prof. Comfort; two clergymen, Drs. Bellows and Thompson; three painters, Messrs. Kensett, Baker, and Whittredge; and three of my own profession, Calvert Vaux, Consulting Architect of the Central Park Board, P. B. Wight, architect of the National Academy of Design, and myself. Much good humor prevailed over the result of the previous exertions of those who had been most active in the premises. There was a free exchange of opinion as to the prospects of the new-born institution and as to available methods for carrying it to success, to which and to the chief workers so far toasts were pledged."

Of course, the following day and for some days to come, the various newspapers commented at length on the latest project for a Metropolitan Art Museum. We quote from the New York Evening Mail:

"If better guarantee were wanted of a successful issue of

the project than that given in the other names on the list of the committee, those of the Central Park Commissioners which we find there would be sufficient to satisfy us that this scheme, unlike the abortive efforts of the past in this direction, will come to fruit.

"The coöperation of the Park Commissioners means, in the first place, a site worth half a million of dollars, whereon to erect a museum; secondly, it means invaluable assistance in raising the necessary funds to erect the building; and thirdly, it means invaluable advice in its construction and the best custodianship of it and its treasures when it is a completed thing."[1]

The Provisional Committee held frequent meetings during the following months, sometimes at the rooms of the Century Club, No. 109 East 15th Street, and again at the rooms of Samuel P. Avery, No. 88 Fifth Avenue. Many letters passed between different members of the committee. In brief, they gave themselves unstintingly to the cause they had espoused. Their number was increased from fifty to one hundred and sixteen by the appointment of the members of the Art Committee of the Union League Club, the officers of the public meeting whose names were not already included, and other gentlemen. Honorary Corresponding Secretaries both in America and Europe were chosen.

[1]The Park Commissioners had reason to be interested in any efforts toward establishing a museum of art, inasmuch as they themselves in May of that same year had been authorized by legislative act "to erect, establish, conduct, and maintain in the Central Park in said City, a meteorological and astronomical observatory, and a museum of natural history and a gallery of art, and the buildings therefor, and to provide the necessary instruments, furniture, and equipments for the same." With Andrew H. Green, a member of the first Board of Commissioners, who conceived the plan of a Central Park, originated the idea of including within that park all the buildings necessary for the education or rational pleasure of the people. The site selected for this art gallery in the park was the one occupied to-day by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and plans adapted to the site were prepared by Calvert Vaux and J. W. Mould.

At the first meeting of the committee, December 7, 1869, Hon. Henry G. Stebbins was made President of the Committee and Theodore Weston, Secretary. A sub-committee of thirteen was appointed, consisting of George P. Putnam, who was made Chairman, J. Q. A. Ward, S. R. Gifford, Joseph H. Choate, Frederick Law Olmsted, William E. Dodge, Jr., Andrew H. Green, Lucius H. Tuckerman, Robert Hoe, Jr., W. T. Blodgett, John H. Hall, William J. Hoppin, and Calvert Vaux, "to draw a plan of organization for a Metropolitan Art Museum Association, and to nominate a list of officers."

While this committee was working over such important problems, Mr. Putnam, the chairman, received two letters of advice and help from which it seems wise to quote freely. The first, from Prof. Comfort of Princeton, dated December 13, 1869, is of interest both as revealing an exact knowledge of the conditions in European museums at that time and as unfolding the earnest, helpful character of this ardent student and teacher of art. He writes, "I hope that the committee, in their deliberations, will not overlook the Leipsic Museum—opened in 1858;—the Amsterdam Museum opened in 1865; the Gotha Museum with its remarkable collection of 20,000 casts of coins; the 'National-Museum' now being built in Berlin to contain only modern German paintings and sculpture; the 'Deutsches Museum' which was established in Nuremberg a few years ago, the object of which is to illustrate the application of art to industry in Germany as well as other branches of German history;—and especially the hitherto unparalleled collection of casts in the 'New Museum' of Berlin.

"The Cluny Museum in Paris, and several of the Musées departmentales in such cities of France as Rouen and Lyons give perhaps the best illustration of the 'applied arts' of the middle ages that are to be found in any European Museums.

"It would be a misfortune also not to have all of the intelligent criticisms and valuable practical suggestions with reference to the organization of museums that have come before the artistic public in Europe, either in the discussions of the archaeological societies or in the archaeological journals, taken advantage of in a Metropolitan Museum of Art for New York City. The other cities will follow rapidly in the wake of New York in this movement, and New York should, if possible, put up a museum which should, both in its edifice and in its appointments, be a model for the world."

The second letter, from Rev. Dr. Henry W. Bellows, dated January 7, 1870, is an answer to a request for his counsel "with reference to the fittest men to have charge of the enterprise." The committee had not yet decided, apparently, what nominations to submit. Dr. Bellows, who spoke with such infectious enthusiasm on November 23, 1869, now expressed his recognition of the difficulties connected with the project, and the need of men of unusual "faith and prevision" to meet and surmount the obstacles. "Men," he writes, "who can make provisional agreements with the Central Park Trustees for an ample site; who can quietly collect the amount necessary to procure from the best architects we have, in connection with the best specialists in the history and proper elements of an Art Museum — a plan, which can be presented in all its majesty and charm to the public and the men of wealth — and yet which can be built piecemeal, as it is needed, or just in advance of the need? . . . .

"It wants men of middle age, of unabated energy, resolute will, and hot enthusiasm to carry forward such a work; and among them must be men of art-culture and positive art knowledge.

"This class is very small — for men of affairs and enterprise and executive ability are seldom interested in art, or

marked with taste and appreciation of the delicate interests of the Beautiful; and artists, a brooding, dreamy, meditative class, closed to the world by their intensity of passion for their coy mistress, are seldom men of practical wisdom, push, and enterprise. Still it is in this rare class that we must look for the men alone competent to supply alike thought and action, both indispensable in this art museum enterprise! We must have a Board of Trustees, or a committee — not large eno' to allow factions within it, neutralizing each other's zeal; small enough to make the responsibility deeply felt by each, and to compact all together by a sense of mutual dependence; not too large to take from each a feeling that his share in the labor and honor of the enterprise is considerable and worth striving hard to get and to keep; not so small that it will be a clique, and be wholly dominated by one master-mind.

"The enterprise wants a Head, to begin with — one man in whose soul the enterprise is a principal thing, and about whom the Trustees can rally and fire up with his courage and hope and determination. Perhaps this man cannot yet be named and is to be discovered by his fellows among the Trustees! Until he does appear things will drag; when he turns up, the cause is won! It is worth pains to find him."

Doctor Bellows concludes with the hope that "the councils of the Committee of Fifty will be broad, noble, impersonal, unprejudiced, and solely animated with a zeal for the interests of Art and the glory of our Metropolis and the good of Humanity." This quotation by its very emphasis upon the noble characteristics of men ideally fitted for the work but accentuates the unswerving devotion, the wonderful faith, and the abundant works of the real men who were pioneers in our Museum.

On January 4, 1870, the sub-committee made a carefully

prepared report on the first task — to draw up a plan of organization — with the articles of the constitution submitted for adoption, declaring that "in their judgment the proposed Museum should be comprehensive in its scope and purpose.

"That it should include not only collections of paintings and sculpture, but should also contain drawings, engravings, medals, photographs, architectural models, historical portraits, and specimens illustrating the application of art to manufactures; thus affording to our whole people free and ample means for innocent and refined enjoyment, and also supplying the best facilities for practical instruction and for the cultivation of pure taste in all matters connected with the fine arts."

The plan of organization submitted was purposely as simple as possible because it was but a provisional constitution. It was adapted to one end, to secure a collection of works of art, and left all details of administration and exhibition of objects for future decision, on the ground that those who later became benefactors of the Museum should not be deprived of their rightful share in determining its policy. The officers named were a President, three Vice Presidents, nine Trustees, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, a Treasurer, and an Executive Committee of thirteen.

The other task entrusted to the committee of thirteen, that of presenting a ticket of nominations for permanent officers, was performed most generously by providing not one ticket but two "for revision and choice." When this report was presented, January 17, 1870, an advisory committee combined the two tickets into one by taking names from both lists, the following names standing as the nominations. On January 31, 1870, these men were elected as the first officers of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

THE PERIOD OF ORGANIZATION

PRESIDENT

JOHN TAYLOR JOHNSTON

VICE PRESIDENTS

WM. C. BRYANT
GENERAL JOHN A. DIX

TRUSTEES

WM. H. ASPINWALL
C. E. DETMOLD
ANDREW H. GREEN
WM. J. HOPPIN
JOHN F. KENSETT
HON. E. D. MORGAN
HOWARD POTTER
H. G. STEBBINS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

WM. T. BLODGETT
S. L. M. BARLOW
GEO. F. COMFORT
F. E. CHURCH
JOSEPH H. CHOATE
ROBERT GORDON
ROBERT HOE, JR.
EASTMAN JOHNSON
F. L. OLMSTED
GEO. P. PUTNAM
LUCIUS TUCKERMAN
J. Q. A. WARD
R. M. HUNT

TREASURER

SAMUEL G. WARD

RECORDING SECRETARY

THEODORE WESTON

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

RUSSELL STURGIS, JR.

The choice of John Taylor Johnston as President was spontaneous. He measured up to Dr. Bellows' standard of the "Head" of such an enterprise. He was a man "of middle age, of unabated energy, resolute will, and hot

enthusiasm." Though a man of "affairs, enterprise, and executive ability," he had long been interested in art. He had assembled in his house the most important collection of pictures then in America, which he had freely opened to the public. He had a large acquaintance among the artists, who were wont to assemble every year at a reception given in their honor, and enjoy not only his many works of art but that "artists' punch" which Charles Astor Bristed celebrated in song.[1] He was abroad at the time and had taken no part in the preliminary meetings, but when a cable reached him on the Nile offering him the presidency, and stating that the enterprise would be launched at once if he would accept, the committee promptly received by return cable an affirmative reply.

His presidency of nineteen years was an active one, and covered the entire formative period of the Museum's growth. Failing health compelled his resignation in 1889, but he continued as Honorary President until his death in 1893. In the words of the memorial resolution then adopted, "To his rare tact, refined taste, large experience, and excellent judgment the Trustees of the Museum have been greatly beholden for the harmony and singleness of purpose which have prevailed in their councils, the prodigiously rapid growth of their collections, and the ample esteem in which the Museum is now held by the public."

It is difficult for us to realize the position in which these first officers found themselves. They had no building, not even a site, no existing collection as a nucleus, no ready money to use, no legal title or status, only the "clearly defined idea of a Museum of Art and the united will to create it," as William C. Prime, later First Vice President, said years afterward, and yet he was able to record that there

[1] See a poem entitled That Punch!!! and dated Feb. 11, 1865, which was printed for private circulation.

was "no hesitation, no pause, no shadow or cloud, not an hour of doubt or discouragement."

The drafting of a charter, the adoption of a permanent constitution and by-laws, and the defining of a proper policy: these were imperative as the next steps. On the 13th day of April, 1870, the Legislature of the State of New York granted an act of incorporation to the officers and George William Curtis under the name of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, "to be located in the City of New York, for the purpose of establishing and maintaining in said city a museum and library of art, of encouraging and developing the study of the fine arts, and the application of arts to manufacture and practical life, of advancing the general knowledge of kindred subjects, and, to that end, of furnishing popular instruction and recreation."

At a meeting held May 24, 1870, termed the First Annual Meeting, the permanent constitution was adopted. For record, at least, this should be included here.

ARTICLE I

The persons named in the Act of Incorporation, and such of their associates in the unincorporated Association heretofore known as "The Metropolitan Museum of Art," as shall on the adoption of this Corporation and charter sign their names thereto in token of acceptance thereof, shall be members of this Corporation.

Whenever by death, resignation, or otherwise, the number of members shall be less than two hundred and fifty, new members may be elected to fill up that number, but not to exceed the same. Such new members shall be elected only upon the nomination of the Trustees, at a regular meeting of the Corporation, and the votes of two-thirds of the members present at such meeting shall be requisite to an election of a new member.

ARTICLE II

The officers of this Corporation shall be a President, nine Vice-Presidents, twenty-one Trustees, a Treasurer, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, the several Committees hereinafter named, and such Special Committees as shall from time to time be created by the Trustees.

ARTICLE III

The President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, and Secretaries shall be elected annually, by ballot, at the annual meeting to be held on the second Monday in May, at eight o'clock P. M. They shall each hold office for the term of one year, and until their successors are elected. At the first annual meeting twenty-one Trustees shall be elected by ballot; and the Trustees so elected shall at their first meeting be divided by lot into seven classes, of three each; the first class to hold office for one year, the second for two years, the third for three years, the fourth for four years, the fifth for five years, the sixth for six years, the seventh for seven years. And at each subsequent annual election three Trustees only shall be elected by ballot to fill the places of the class whose term shall then expire, and to hold their offices for seven years. The President and the Treasurer of this Corporation, and also the Mayor of the City of New York, the Governor of the State of New York, the President of the Department of Public Parks in the City of New York, the Commissioner of Public Works in the City of New York, the President of the National Academy of Design, and the President of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, for the time being, shall also be ex-officio Trustees of this Corporation.

ARTICLE IV

The Trustees shall have the general management of the

affairs of the Corporation, and the control of its property. They shall meet quarterly, on the third Monday of every March, May, September, and December, at an hour and place to be designated, on at least one week's written notice from the Secretary; and shall annually, at the quarterly meeting in May, elect, from their own number, Executive, Auditing, and Finance Committees for the ensuing year. They shall also meet at any other time to transact special business, on a call of the Secretary, who shall issue such call whenever requested so to do, in writing, by five Trustees, or by the President, and give written notice to each Trustee of such special meeting, and of the object thereof, at least three days before the meeting is held. Any vacancies occurring in the Board of Trustees otherwise than by the expiration of the term of office for which a Trustee shall have been elected, shall be filled by the remaining Trustees by ballot, and the Trustee so elected shall take the place of the Trustee whose office has become vacant, and hold his office for the same term as such original Trustee would have held. Any such vacancy occurring in any other office shall be filled, until the next annual election, by the Trustees, by ballot.

ARTICLE V

The President, and in his absence, the Senior Vice-President present, shall preside at all the meetings of the Museum. The Recording Secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Trustees, of the Executive Committee, and of the Auditing Committee, and shall preserve the seal, archives, and correspondence of the Museum, shall issue notices for all meetings of the Trustees, and attend the same. The Corresponding Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Museum, be present, and participate in all meetings of the Trustees and Executive Committee. The Treasurer shall receive, and, under the direction of the Finance Committee,

disburse the funds of the Museum. He shall keep the accounts of the Museum in books belonging to it, which shall be at all times open to the inspection of the Trustees. He shall report in writing at each quarterly meeting of the Trustees, the balance of money on hand, and the outstanding obligations of the Museum, as far as practicable, and shall make a full report, at the annual meeting, of the receipts and disbursements of the past year, with such suggestions as to the financial management of the Museum as he may deem proper.

ARTICLE VI

The Executive Committee shall consist of five. They shall have the immediate charge, control, and regulation of the Collections, Library, and other property of the Museum, and shall have power to purchase, sell, and exchange the pictures, and other Works of Art, Curiosities, and Books of the Museum, to employ agents, to regulate the manner and terms of exhibiting the Museum to the public, and generally to carry out in detail the directions of the Trustees; but neither the Executive Committee, nor any officer or agent of the Museum, shall incur any expense, liability, or indebtedness for the Museum, without the express authority of the Trustees, given by a vote of the Board at a regular meeting thereof. The President and Treasurer shall also be, ex-officio, members of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VII

The Auditing Committee shall consist of three, none of whom shall belong to the Executive Committee, and it shall be their duty to examine and certify all bills presented against the corporation; and no bills shall be paid unless first approved in writing by at least two members of this Committee.

ARTICLE VIII

The Finance Committee shall consist of three, including the Treasurer, and it shall be their duty to take charge of and invest the funds of the Museum in its name, and to take all proper measures to provide means for its support.

ARTICLE IX

Eleven of the Trustees, exclusive of the ex-officio members, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but five Trustees meeting may adjourn and transact current business, subject to the subsequent approval of a meeting at which a quorum shall be present.

ARTICLE X

Special Meetings of the Corporation may be called at any time by the Secretary, upon an order of the President, or the written request of any ten members, and at all meetings of the Corporation twenty members shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE XI

By-laws may from time to time be made by the Trustees, providing for the care and management of the property of the Corporation, and for the government of its affairs.

Such By-laws, when once adopted, may be amended at any meeting of the Trustees by a vote of a majority of those present, after a month's notice, in writing, of such proposed amendment.

ARTICLE XII

The contribution of one thousand dollars or more to the fund of the Museum, at one time, shall entitle the person giving the same to be a Patron of the Museum.

The contribution of five hundred dollars, at one time, shall entitle the person giving the same to be a Fellow in Perpetu-

ity, who shall have the right to appoint his successor in such Fellowship in Perpetuity.

The contribution of two hundred dollars, at one time, shall entitle the person giving the same to be a Fellow for Life.

Any person may be elected by the Trustees to either of the above degrees, who shall have donated to the Museum Books or Works of Art, which shall have been accepted by the Executive Committee, to the value of twice the amount in money requisite to his admission to the same degree, and the President and Secretary shall issue Diplomas accordingly, under the seal of the Museum. The Trustees may also elect Honorary Fellows of the Museum in their discretion.

All persons receiving such degrees and diplomas shall be entitled at all times to free admission to the Museum, but shall not, by virtue of such degrees and diplomas, become members of the Corporation.

ARTICLE XIII

No alterations shall be made in this Constitution unless by the affirmative vote of a majority of all the members of the Corporation at the time being, nor without notice in writing of the proposed alteration, embodying the amendment proposed to be made, having been given by the Secretary at least thirty days before the meeting at which such amendment shall be considered.

The committee to which was given the important work of determining the proper policy of the Association had reported in February, 1870. Their vision of a many-sided museum and their unwillingness to plan for anything less comprehensive than that must challenge our admiration. From their report we cull these words: "The Metropolitan Museum of Art should be based on the idea of a more or less complete collection of objects illustrative of the History

of Art from the earliest beginnings to the present time. We consider this definition important. It will be seen that whilst it gives a distinct purpose to our efforts, it includes all the aims, whether industrial, educational, or recreative, which can give value to such an institution.

"In making purchases, the object would be in the outset to limit and define their direction so as not to dissipate means without producing tangible results. Fortunately, there is a large class of objects of the highest beauty, and of inestimable value toward the formation of sound taste in Art, which can be had in great completeness by a comparatively moderate expenditure, and with the smallest possible delay. These are the casts of statues and sculpture of all sorts, of architectural subjects and details.

"In this direction, with reasonable good judgment, it is impossible to go wrong, The same may be said of the formation of a Library of Art, consisting of all works of value on all its branches and history. This we consider a prime essential.

"The purchase of collections of undoubted value, and of single objects in special directions, is, of course, a subject of first-rate importance, but it is obvious that its consideration must be deferred until the completion of an organization and the possession of ample means, and form part of a carefully considered system.

"The principle should be to keep in view the historical aim of the collection, and to admit no works but those of an acknowledged and representative value."

Naturally the suggestion of holding loan exhibitions, which had come from C. C. Cole at the first public meeting, was carefully considered during this formative period. A Loan Exhibition Committee, Russell Sturgis, Chairman, appointed February 14, 1870, reported six weeks later in a long discussion of pros and cons that a Loan Exhibition was both possi-

ble and advisable, but that it would be impossible to find any building at all suitable for the purpose. This matter came up again in January, 1871, when Messrs. Tiffany and Company offered free use of the second story of their new building on Union Square for a two months' loan exhibition. The letter, so encouraging in its unlooked-for proffer of help, reads thus:

"It having been suggested to Mr. Tiffany that the National Museum at Kensington owes its origin to an exhibition of rare objects, lent to the Society of Arts, and that New York only needed a suitable building to warrant a commensurate success, he desires me to tender to you, sir, and through you to the other gentlemen, directors of the Museum of Science and Art, for that purpose free of expense, the use for sixty days of the second floor of this building.

"Happy in being the medium of an offer so likely to awaken public feeling for art, and in hope of the more sanguine expectations being realized,

"I remain, dear sir, yours very respectfully,

E. T. MAGAURAN."

This was a generous offer that might well seem at first sight to require no action but grateful acceptance, but the Loan Exhibition Committee pointed out that the effort, time, and money required for an exhibition which could be only temporary might better be expended in furthering the main purpose of the organization. To turn aside from their principal aim, which was to obtain a site and a building for a permanent collection, might prove but to dissipate their energy. If, however, the subscription were unattainable without some such means to win popular favor, then the loan exhibition should be undertaken as a last resource. After a discussion of all the aspects of the question, the Executive Committee declined the generous offer but con-

veyed to Messrs. Tiffany & Co. their high appreciation of the motives which prompted their liberal action.

Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars was the amount which the Trustees determined to raise by subscription, a sum pitiably small, in the retrospect of forty years, with which to start an institution whose money resources, quite aside from its collections, now aggregate nearly forty times as much. But dollars were fewer then. The canvass for subscriptions was quietly but persistently and systematically carried on during 1870 and 1871. The names of those who might be interested in the establishment of the Museum were apportioned to different officers of the association for personal interview and appeal. Every member recognized that the success of the undertaking depended upon the possibility of raising the needed money. To tell the whole truth, we must acknowledge that only a small percentage of the men approached for money in this personal canvass responded to the appeal. Yet by March, 1871, $106,000 in amounts ranging from $10,000, the gift made by John Taylor Johnston, to $100, had been pledged by one hundred and six persons, one hundred and five men and one woman, Miss Catharine L. Wolfe, whose name is familiar to many through her later benefactions. At one meeting the Executive Committee was directed to inquire into the desirability of appointing a committee of ladies to solicit subscriptions, but apparently this was not deemed desirable. The rapid increase in wealth in New York City since 1870 is strikingly illustrated by contrasting the scale of giving then with the much larger sums received to-day. Only three men gave $5,000 or over for the establishment of the Museum: John Taylor Johnston, $10,000; W. T. Blodgett, $5,000; and Alexander T. Stewart, $5,000.

In March, 1871, a pamphlet was issued containing the subscription list and an address to the people of New York,

to inform them what had now been accomplished and what was planned for the future. One announcement reads: "The Officers of the Museum desire especially to begin at an early day the formation of a collection of industrial art, of objects of utility to which decorative art has been applied, ornamental metalwork, carving in wood, ivory, and stone, painted glass, glass vessels, pottery, enamel, and all other materials. The time is particularly favorable for purchases in this great department, and the need of forming such a collection for the use of our mechanics and students is most obvious and pressing." In this, as in other statements, the influence of the South Kensington Museum upon the Metropolitan Museum is very evident.

An abstract of the pamphlet, published in the newspapers, called forth editorial comment universally congratulatory. The Evening Mail voiced the common feeling in a daringly hopeful prediction: "We believe that the Metropolitan Art Museum enterprise is not only handsomely launched, but that the most trying era of its history has been passed. The gentlemen who have devoted so much of their time and labor to the work of preliminary organization have had much to do that will never see the light or be generally appreciated, but they ought to receive the approbation of the community for the care and judgment with which they have laid the foundations of an enterprise grand enough in its now almost assured future to yield lasting credit to all the movers in its inception. The subsequent work of the friends of the Museum will be comparatively plain and easy. Subscriptions will pour in with an arithmetical ratio of increase, as it becomes understood that the project is no longer merely speculative but a substantial and growing reality. As is usual in all such cases, 'the crowd will follow the crowd,' success will bring other successes, and at last there will be few men of means in the City who will not be unwilling or

ashamed to decline the honor of aiding in the establishment of a Museum worthy to rank with most of those in the Old World."[1]

Yet less than a twelvemonth before, little was generally known of the real status of the Museum project, though, as we know, much had been quietly accomplished. In fact, the Home Journal of April 20, 1870, just one week after the charter was obtained, published an editorial amusingly wide the mark, as the following extract will show:

"There was inaugurated last year, as some may remember, 'The Association of the Metropolitan Art Museum.' This association started with an art collection *in posse* rivaling those of the Vatican, the Louvre, the Pinacothek, and several other European attempts. It was a veritable ornament to the city, and a precious acquisition to the art resources of the country. Just what this organization has since accomplished, or where it is to be found at present, we cannot say. When last heard from, it had a great future before it, but exhibited no signals of alarm or distress. We are confident it 'still lives.' It must be in existence somewhere, for certainly such a body could not so soon evaporate from the solar system by any natural process. It may be in the condition of Mr. Bryant's celebrated waterfowl, which he saw diving into the sunset, and which, he states, went on 'lone wandering but not lost.' That the association will some day reappear on the arena of affairs we cannot doubt. *Resurgam, Non omnis moriar, Rara avis*, and other passages in the dictionary of quotations all point to a reappearance." From March, 1871, no alert editor could question the existence of the Museum, for conditions permitted much more use of advertising, of which the officers took full advantage.

By the pamphlet of March, 1871, the Trustees announced a fact of prime importance, that through the purchase by

[1] N. Y. Evening Mail, March 14, 1871.

two officers of the museum, a collection of one hundred and seventy-four paintings, principally Dutch and Flemish, but including representative works of the Italian, French, English, and Spanish Schools, had been secured for the Museum. This happy result was due to the foresight and generosity of William T. Blodgett, assisted by John Taylor Johnston. Mr. Blodgett during the preceding summer had been able to purchase on most advantageous terms, owing to the outbreak of war between France and Prussia, two collections: one of one hundred pictures from the gallery of a well-known citizen of Brussels, and one of seventy-four pictures owned by a distinguished Parisian gentleman. These were bought at Mr. Blodgett's own expense and risk, but with the intention of permitting the Museum to benefit by his purchase, if the Trustees so desired. Mr. Blodgett's own statement in a letter read before the Trustees November 19, 1870, shows the disinterested character of his offer and refutes the assertion of some men of his day that he had acted in excess of his authority. He writes, "Should the action of the undersigned be assumed by the Committee and Board of Trustees, he proposes to transfer the collection to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, . . . at the original cost, and further the undersigned, to insure and protect the Museum, . . . is willing that the Trustees should have the right to reject at the time of purchase, any picture or pictures not fully established by the certificates of the experts . . . as originals . . . and in the event of such rejection, the rejected picture or pictures to be returned to the undersigned, at a valuation to be agreed upon by him and the Trustees." Before this generous offer had been accepted, John Taylor Johnston had assumed one-half of the cost ($116,180.27 including expenses), borrowing on joint account with Mr. Blodgett $100,000 from the Bank of America. In March, 1871, the Museum assumed the purchase and

agreed to pay the amount whenever the requisite funds were at hand.

Thus by the forceful initiative of two men, the Museum came into possession of a valuable nucleus towards its permanent gallery. When Mr. Johnston first saw a part of the pictures, he wrote to Mr. Blodgett, "I have just returned from a survey of the pictures, with Ward and Hoppin. I am simply *delighted*. . . . The quality of the collection as a whole is superior to anything I had dared to hope, while the number of masterpieces is very great and what we have reason to be proud of. . . . Hoppin and I both agreed that 'it was very magnanimous in Blodgett not to keep some of those fine things when he had it in his power.' I fear I couldn't have done it. I would have had at least to have taken out that Van Dyck, or perished." Later Mr. Johnston added, "Three days have but deepened my impression that we have secured a great prize, and I do feel desirous to let you know that impression, especially as I was one of those that thought you had been somewhat rash in the original purchase. I am very glad of it and only hope all other rashnesses may turn out so well." The editor of the Gazette des Beaux-Arts in turn thought this purchase of sufficient importance to print two articles congratulating the new museum on its fortunate purchase and describing the individual pictures.[1] It may be well to couple with this early opinion what Mr. Choate said forty years later, "Let me say that the collection bought then on the responsibility of one man . . . was so good and contained so many old masters that very few of those he bought have been rejected or laid aside."

[1] Louis Decamps. Un Musée Transatlantique, in Gazette des Beaux-Arts, January and May, 1872. The most important of these paintings were etched by M. Jules Jacquemart and published by Messrs. P. & D. Colnaghi of London. In this way they became more generally known abroad.

One other most important accomplishment during 1871 was the passage by the Legislature on April 5th of "an act in relation to the powers and duties of the Board of Commissioners of the Department of Public Parks" of the City of New York by which among other clauses they were "authorized to construct, erect, and maintain upon that portion of the Central Park formerly known as Manhattan Square, or any other public park, square, or place" in the city "a suitable fireproof building for the purpose of establishing and maintaining therein a Museum and Gallery of Art by The Metropolitan Museum of Art" at an "aggregate cost of not exceeding a sum of which the annual interest is thirty-five thousand dollars." The same act made a similar provision for the American Museum of Natural History. Thereby it became lawful for the Comptroller of the City of New York to create and issue "a public fund or stock to be denominated the 'Museums of Art and Natural History Stock'."

For several weeks previous to this date a committee of the Museum working jointly with a committee from the American Museum of Natural History had exercised all vigilance and discretion in pushing this bill through the Legislature. They had written letters and persuaded others to do the same; they had personally repaired to Albany with petitions signed by many prominent New Yorkers, and had influenced others to reënforce their efforts.

At the fortieth annual meeting of the Museum, Professor Comfort recalled one incident in these stirring times as follows: "I will refer to the petition which was signed by owners of more than one-half of the real estate of New York City, to the Legislature, requesting that authority be given to the city to tax itself for one half a million of dollars for museum buildings to be placed upon a park. I, representing this Museum, and a representative of the Museum of

Natural History took the petition to Albany. Tweed and Sweeney were in power then. We arrived there about noon and about half-past two we were told to see Mr. Tweed and Mr. Sweeney . . . and the other heads of the party in power, and to lay our paper before them. . . .

"We arrived there and we were placed in seats behind Mr. Tweed as he sat at a table, and he said: 'We will see what the New York papers say about us to-day,' and there they were, and as we handed the paper in, he looked at it a moment, saw the heading and instantly, with that celerity of action for which he was noted, he took it to a room, and said: 'You will see Mr. Sweeney. He will take charge of this.' Then Mr. Sweeney took the paper and skipped the heading, and looked at the names, and when he saw the names attached to it, then he turned back and read the heading. And as I watched his face there was not the quiver of an eye, or twitch of the muscles, but he turned quickly and said: 'Please inform these gentlemen that we are the servants of the people. This is New York. New York wishes this and please inform them and say that they can see us on two or three details of the matter, and then this will go through.'

"We telegraphed to New York and two or three gentlemen came up, and Mr. Sweeney came and said: 'This is just in our line, in line with our ideas of progress in New York City. We are the elected and official representatives of the City and you ask this sum to be given to a Museum to be built on city property. Now, as representatives of the city we must control that building,' and as quick as thought, our Committee turned and conceded that point, and the statute was passed, and with that commenced the coöperation of the municipality with the individual contributors."

This may well stand as the close of the period of establishment. The first year of the legal existence of the Museum

was finished, the first annual report submitted May 8, 1871. Whatever difficulties the future might present, some things had been definitely accomplished, and could not be undone. The beginning of a collection of works of art had been secured, and legislative authority had been given to the city to erect a museum building.

CHAPTER II

THE MUSEUM IN THE DODWORTH BUILDING

1871-1873

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THE MUSEUM IN THE DODWORTH BUILDING

1871—1873

THE next problem that confronted the Museum was to find some building as conveniently located and suitably arranged as possible for temporary occupancy, to exhibit the paintings already in the possession of the Museum, but stored in Cooper Union for want of an exhibition room. The Dodworth Building, 681 Fifth Avenue, between 53d and 54th Streets, a private residence that had been altered for Allen Dodworth's Dancing Academy was leased December 1, 1871, for $9,000 annually, the lease to expire May 1, 1874. The property included a stable, the rent of which would be a slight asset for the Museum. This earliest home of the Museum was exceptionally well constructed for the purpose. "A skylight let into the ceiling of the large hall where the poetry of motion had been taught to so many of the young men and maidens of New York, converted it into a picture gallery."[1]

Representatives of the press and artists were invited here to a private view of the pictures on February 17, 1872, and punch and oysters were served. The opening reception for subscribers and their friends was held on February 20th. We are fortunate in having a memorandum in George P. Putnam's handwriting containing the names of the news-

[1] W. L. Andrews. Bulletin, Vol. II, p. 1. In the directories of 1869 to 1871, and again from 1874 for several years, Mr. Dodworth is recorded as occupying this building for his dancing academy.

papers and magazines that were to be included in the distribution of invitations, and certain individuals, who as art critics or interested friends should not be forgotten. Among the periodicals we find some no longer published, as The Home Journal, The Liberal Christian, The Golden Age, the Albion, The Hearth and Home, and The Galaxy.

We are fortunate also in possessing two letters written by John Taylor Johnston to William Tilden Blodgett, which transport us to those days of eager hope, so decisive for good or ill.

"February 10, 1872.

. . . . . .

"We are just in the stir and bustle of preparing to open the Museum. The pictures are hung and look remarkably well. Some cracking and blistering has taken place after all the care with which they were cradled, etc., but not much. The great question has been about the Loan Exhibition. Sturgis and the Loan Committee have held back about it, but the rest of us have been of the opinion that small collections in the different departments would indicate the breadth of our designs, while the smallness of our space would sufficiently explain the lack of quantity. It is now understood that the center of the exhibition room is to have a row of low cases for bronzes or whatever they can secure that will not obstruct the view of the pictures. High cases will succeed when the novelty of the collection is worn off. My Napoleon goes into the room north of hall. Captain Alden's wood carvings are secured and are to be in the N. E. basement room.[1] The

[1]Three confessionals and considerable wall paneling, remarkably fine examples of sixteenth and seventeenth century carved oak, which came from Ghent, from the suppressed convent of the Béquine sisters, and were purchased by Colonel Bradford R. Alden, U. S. A., in London, were lent to the Museum by Mrs. Alden. When the Museum removed to Central Park, they were taken to New Haven and later became the property of the Yale School of the Fine Arts.

sarcophagus on inspection turns out to be a fine work of art, late Roman, probably a royal tomb. The Westchester Apollo is still to be investigated. . . . The pictures overflow the great hall and are to have the best place in the rooms also. The hanging committee have worked like beavers.

"I observe what you say about additional purchase of Dutch and Flemish pictures. Personally I should like and prefer to follow up that school and make the Gallery *strong* in one thing, and it may be found judicious to do so. Much will depend, however, on how our pictures take with the public. Unless they are a decided success, it may be well to branch out in some other line before going deeper into pictures, the more so as our space (is limited).

. . . . . .

"Gordon is slowly collecting in the (subscriptions?). The debt in bank is reduced to $15,000, perhaps some less. It is a shame to our citizens that the amount was not forthcoming at once.

"The general opening is to be on the 20th and we hope to make it a success. On the 17th we have the press and some of the artists; on the 19th the Trustees.

"We will soon therefore know what is thought of our labors so far.

. . . . . .

"February 22, 1872.

"Hoppin tells me that he has written you at some length about our great success in getting together the Artists and Pressmen. . . . Personally, I felt very apprehensive of the effect of inviting the disaffected artist element and the gentlemen of the Press, but it all worked *very* well. One party who came there with an artist told me afterwards that they halted for a moment before going in, in front of the

building, and the artist told him it was a 'd — d humbug' and added he, 'I thought so too, but when we came out we thought very differently.'

"Our public reception on the 20th was an equal success. We had a fine turnout of ladies and gentlemen and all were highly pleased. The pictures looked splendidly and compliments were so plenty and strong that I was afraid the mouths of the Trustees would become chronically and permanently fixed in a broad grin. The Loan Committee worked hard at the last and got together a few things of interest, and perhaps it was as well that at the first there should be little to take off the attention from the pictures and also that we should be able to announce from time to time additions to the Loan Exhibition. Vela's Napoleon[1] was in place and looked splendidly and excited universal admiration. It is better, if anything, than the original and the marble is perfect. I saw it myself, for the first time, on the reception evening and was perfectly satisfied. We have secured but not yet put up Mr. Alden's fine woodwork. It is much finer than we had supposed, having only before seen it in the cellar.

"The Westchester Apollo turns out to be three feet high, a statuette. We decided, however, to take it.

"Mr. Rowe presents us with a colossal dancing girl by Schwanthaler, the celebrated German sculptor at Munich. It may be very fine, but eight feet of dance is a trial to the feelings. Hereafter, we must curb the exuberance of donors except in the article of money, of which latter they may give as much as they please. The sarcophagus has not yet been moved up but will be soon. I think I wrote you that Sturgis on examination liked it very much. J. Augustus Johnson

[1] This marble by Vincenzo Vela from the John Taylor Johnston Collection is now exhibited in the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and is catalogued as The Last Days of Napoleon I.

(the donor) has since seen it and pronounces it a fine specimen of the later Roman and probably a royal tomb. It will be more carefully examined when 'in situ.'

"We may now consider the Museum fairly launched and

THE DODWORTH BUILDING
681 FIFTH AVENUE

under favorable auspices. People were generally surprised, and agreeably so, to find what we had. No one had imagined that we could make such a show, and the disposition to praise is now as general as the former disposition to depreciate. We have now something to point to as the Museum, something tangible and something good. The cry of humbug can hardly be raised now by anyone. ——, I

believe, says very little now about the swindle of the two New York merchants and the Loan Committee intend to come down on him for the loan of some of his pretty things. —— has forgotten his insulting note declining a post in the Museum board, and now says he supposes 'they' think they can get along without him. And with others there is the same indication of a change in the current.

"It would have gratified you to have heard the regret expressed that you could not have been with us to have enjoyed the triumph of success after having given so much time, trouble, and personal risk to the Institution. It was the only thing wanting to the perfection of the evening.

"Gordon is slowly getting in the money and we are slowly increasing the list of subscribers. We are also busy with the question of site and have met the commissioners several times. It looks very much as if they would consent to our having Reservoir Square and give the Natural History the vacant ground on the east side of Central Park. This delighteth much all, or nearly all, but Church and myself, who are Central Parkers. Anyhow, we are almost certain to have a decision made soon and permanently.

. . . . . .

Yours very truly,
(Signed) JOHN TAYLOR JOHNSTON."

From February 22nd, as the newspapers announced, the gallery was open to the public virtually free; that is, admittance was gained by obtaining tickets from the subscribers, and these were gratuitously distributed to the public in large numbers. Mondays the gallery was closed during the day for cleaning, but open in the evening from 7 till 10 o'clock; other week-days it was open from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. The first of the long list of Museum catalogues was prepared to give information about the pictures. It contained the attri-

butions and comments of the experts, Messieurs Etienne Le Roy, and Léon Gauchez.

The occupancy of a gallery necessitated the appointment of a Superintendent, which need was most happily met by George P. Putnam's generous offer of his services without salary for one year, stipulating only that he have an assistant or clerk and his own incidental expenses. Accordingly an assistant was employed for $12 per week. No one could come to the position with a greater knowledge of the situation or a stronger interest in the growth and success of the Museum than Mr. Putnam. From the moment of the first suggestion made to the Union League Club to the time of his death on December 20, 1872, less than a year after he became Superintendent, he was active in the counsels of the Museum and untiring in its service. He made the following report to the Trustees on May 20, 1872, when the Museum had been open to the public about three months: "The number of visitors to the Museum to the present time is about 6,000 — including Artists, Students, Critics, and Amateurs from other cities and especially a considerable number of visitors from Boston. The Supt. has taken pains to learn as accurately as possible the real impression which the Collection has made upon these Visitors and he is able to say that the Verdict has not only been favorable, without exception, but in nearly every instance, very agreeable surprise has been expressed in regard to the interest and excellence of the Collection. Those persons especially who appear to be most familiar with the Galleries of Europe, and with Art generally, have been most emphatic and enthusiastic in their remarks on our pictures."

The relationship between the Museum and students who desired to copy pictures was very early discussed and determined. On April 1, 1872, it was decided that Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings from 9 to 12

o'clock should be set apart for students, and that they should submit one or more studies to a committee to prove their ability to take advantage of the privilege.

One very weighty question awaited the verdict of the Executive Committee. A certain lace parasol belonging to a Mrs. Taylor had been "stolen" from the Hall of the Museum. The Committee, with due regard for the loser's feelings, yet proper caution lest other lace parasols should disappear, resolved "That this matter, involving a precedent of some importance, be referred to the Trustees, the Executive Committee not being empowered by the Constitution to make such disbursements without special authority; and that Mrs. Taylor be so informed by the Secretary." Having followed the fortunes of the lace parasol so far, we turn with curiosity to the next mention of it and find the Treasurer authorized to pay $24, the valuation placed upon it.

The Executive Committee certainly lost no time in inaugurating the custom of giving lectures on art in the Museum building. On March 6th, they voted to ask Hiram Hitchcock, later a valued Trustee and the Treasurer of the Museum, to read to the Trustees and their friends, his lecture upon General di Cesnola's discoveries in Cyprus. This first Museum lecture was delivered on the evening of the twenty-fifth of March, and "was listened to with great pleasure by a large audience." Only a month later, April 22nd, came the second Museum lecture when Russell Sturgis, Jr., spoke on Ceramic Art.

While the Trustees were taking up these various lines of work in their temporary gallery, they were also considering with the Park Commissioners questions involved in the grant to them of a permanent building. The site designated in the law of April 5, 1871,[1] was Manhattan Square, which we

[1] For the law itself see Charter, Constitution, By-Laws, Lease, Laws, N. Y. 1910, p. 40.

know today as the location of the American Museum of Natural History, and the plan suggested was that the two museums should occupy the same building or buildings upon the same square. Acting upon this understanding, a special sub-committee on buildings representing both museums and consisting of such architects as Messrs. Sturgis, Hunt, Renwick, and Weston, and such men of affairs as Theodore Roosevelt, drew up a set of recommendations for the design, which are of interest to us as embodying their opinion of the needs of museum construction.

"First: The two Museums require very different exhibition rooms and different arrangements of interiors; they should therefore be separate and their designs should be independent each of the other.

"Second: The building of each Museum should be so planned as to enclose ultimately a court or courts which may be roofed with glass, the floors of these courts to be continuous with the floors of the lower or ground stories of the surrounding buildings.

"Third: The surrounding buildings to be, so far as the Exhibition rooms are concerned, not more than two stories high.

"Fourth: The second story to be partly lighted from the roof, and partly by side light.

"Fifth: The Basement to be high enough and well lighted enough to be used for packing rooms, rooms for repair and preparation, etc.

"Sixth: The buildings to be perfectly fire-proof; the basements to be vaulted in brick, concrete, or beton without the use of iron. Cast iron columns not to be used in any part of the buildings.

"Seventh: The exterior of the buildings to be in stone, granite, or marble.

"Eighth: That any designs that may be accepted by the

Executive Committee of either Museum, whether as final plans for, or to be recommended to the Commissioners of Public Parks, should be demonstrable within the limit, so far as cost is concerned, of the appropriations already made for the purpose."

Not long afterward, we find the Trustees favoring a change of location from Manhattan Square to such other park or place as the Park Commissioners might adopt. Reservoir Square, now known as Bryant Park, adjoining the present site of the New York Public Library, was the unanimous choice of the Executive Committee. In accordance with this desire, a special committee presented a formal petition to the Park Commissioners, asking that Reservoir Square be set apart for the Museum. The accessibility of that location, its proximity to railway stations and the business and theatre sections, would doubtless have greatly increased the annual attendance, for the Museum would thus have gone to the people; but on the other hand, the space available for future expansion would have been limited. Whatever reasons may have influenced the Park Commissioners, they determined on the site now occupied, that part of the Central Park known as the Deer Park, between Seventy-ninth Street and Eighty-fourth Street, from Fifth Avenue to the Drive.[1]

Immediately after April 1, 1872, when this selection was ratified by the Trustees, the committee of architects of the Museum began definitely to work at their task, conferring

[1] The wording of the resolution of the Park Commissioners is as follows: "Resolved: That this Department approves of designating a site for the building for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, on that part of Central Park between 79th and 84th streets and the Fifth Avenue and the Drive, and of designating a site for the building of the American Museum of Natural History on that part of the Central Park west of the Eighth Avenue, and that the President inform these bodies of the action of the Department."

with the newly appointed architect of the Park, Calvert Vaux. Three years earlier Mr. Vaux with J. W. Mould had prepared a comprehensive plan for an art museum, when, as stated elsewhere, Andrew H. Green had conceived the idea of an art museum erected and equipped by the Park Commission, and had secured an enabling act for that purpose. Mr. Vaux was distinguished as a landscape architect. With Frederick L. Olmsted, he presented the successful design for the laying out of Central Park, and either singly or with some associate he planned Prospect Park, Brooklyn, Riverside, and Morningside Parks.

Not until 1874 was the ground for the building in the park actually broken, and even before that date the Museum had outgrown its first quarters. As the purchase of the collection of Dutch and Flemish paintings had occasioned the lease of the Dodworth Building, so the purchase of another valuable collection, the Cesnola Collection of Cypriote Antiquities, necessitated removing to a larger building.

General Louis Palma di Cesnola, the discoverer of the Cypriote antiquities, later for a quarter of a century the Director of the Museum, was by birth an Italian nobleman, by later choice an American citizen. Graduated from the Royal Military Academy of Turin, he had served with distinction in the Italian Revolution, the Crimean War, and our Civil War. In 1865 he was appointed Consul of the United States at Cyprus. Impressed by the thought that Cyprus was the meeting point of the ancient races, and so the Greek settlements there in the heroic period must have derived the old Eastern civilization from Phoenicia and Egypt, he began excavations which, carried on from 1865 to 1871, richly rewarded his labors.

The purchase of this collection was another example of the independent action of one generous man securing for America a prize that Europe would gladly have kept.

John Taylor Johnston, through Junius S. Morgan in London, offered $50,000 for the Cesnola Collection, hoping the Museum might conclude to assume the purchase.

Fortunately much of the correspondence between General Cesnola and Mr. Johnston has been preserved. The earliest letter from General Cesnola was written when by chance an article in Putnam's Magazine[1] about the Museum had fallen into his hands in Cyprus. It offers his collection on most advantageous terms. The following extract contains General Cesnola's own account of his treasures: "I have the most valuable and richest private collection of antiquities existing in the world, which is the result of six years' labor, in this famous island, and of a great outlay of money. Every object was found by me, and they are in all more than ten thousand.

"This collection I want to sell as a whole, if possible. . . . I offer it, therefore, to you as President of the N. Y. Museum for sale. As to its price, arbitrators will be named by both of us, and what they say of its worth, I will beforehand agree to accept. In regard to its payment, if it could not be effected at once, easy terms would be conceded by me. . . .

"In six years I opened eight thousand ancient Phoenician, Greek, Assyrian, and Egyptian tombs, from which I extracted and brought to light vases of a hundred different shapes, from three feet high to only a few inches; — mortuary lamps with Greek inscriptions, bas-reliefs, etc. — Bronzes of every description: strigils, specula, fibulas, spear-heads, . . . etc. etc. — Glass ware of such iridescence that it forms the great attraction of all visitors, more than one thousand objects, such as tear bottles, ointment cups or unguentarias, plates, bottles, etc. etc., bracelets, rings, beads. The most important of my collection are the statues of the famous Temple of Venus, the discovery of which Mr. Birch (of the

[1] Putnam's Magazine, July, 1870.

British Museum) considers the most important of this century, with the exception of Mr. Layard's discovery of Nineveh."

The next letter, sent from Cyprus, March 27, 1872, shows more clearly General Cesnola's deep desire that his collection should be kept together, even though with pecuniary sacrifice to himself, and that it should be exhibited in America. After stating that $24,000 in gold would not cover all his expenses, he writes: "Mr. Hitchcock is authorized, if a public museum or other scientific institution of New York will purchase my collection, to grant any time for the payment of its amount, either in instalments or as he deems best, provided, of course, the money is sure. I do not doubt that you will feel a great interest in seeing that a collection so large, so ancient and unique, and so valuable in point of history, as mine is, which has cost so much labor, time, and money, is secured for America and not scattered. I did not undertake archaeological diggings for a commercial purpose, and though my collection represents today my whole fortune 'in toto,' yet I am disposed to be very reasonable when a *public* Institution would like to purchase it. What I desire above all is that my collection should remain all *together* and be known as the Cesnola Collection." As he in another letter expressed himself, "I have the pride of my race, and that of a Discoverer who wants his name perpetuated with his work if possible."

General Cesnola's patriotic spirit is evidenced by his refusing an offer of £10,000 made by the British Museum for all the sculptures and inscriptions of Golgos, the most important features of his discovery, if he would consent to break up the collection. Instead, he sold the entire collection to Mr. Johnston for $60,000, though experts in England assured him it might bring $200,000 if sold abroad at auction.

Some members of the Museum were in London at the time, for example, Robert Gordon and Cyrus W. Field. Having an opportunity to realize what the British Museum authorities and such a well-known Englishman as the humanist and statesman, Gladstone, thought of General Cesnola's treasures,[1] they almost immediately offered liberal sums towards raising the amount Mr. Johnston had paid General Cesnola. It was, however, not until May, 1874, months after the collection had been publicly exhibited in New York, that the Trustees were able to report that a sufficient sum had been subscribed and the collection had actually become the property of the Museum. Meantime, General Cesnola had been employed to unpack, arrange, and classify the collection, thus beginning that long term of service for the Museum in one capacity or another which ended only with his death.

The collections were removed from the Dodworth Building in the spring of 1873. It was, indeed, but a short period, fifteen months approximately, that the Museum occupied its first home at 681 Fifth Avenue, but during that time it had acquired a standing among institutions of art, chiefly because the Cesnola Collection, then believed to contain the most ancient examples of art in the world, had been deposited in the most youthful museum in the world.

[1] Sidney Colvin, the art critic and Cambridge professor, wrote of his regret that the collection was destined for America, "I can hardly tell you how disappointed and how sorry I am."

CHAPTER III

THE MUSEUM IN THE DOUGLAS MANSION

1873–1879

THE DOUGLAS MANSION
MAIN STAIRCASE
FROM A DRAWING BY FRANK WALLER

CHAPTER III

THE MUSEUM IN THE DOUGLAS MANSION

1873—1879

THE second home of the Museum, which was to contain the collections until the permanent building in the Park should be ready for occupancy, was the house known as the Douglas Mansion, 128 West Fourteenth Street, between Sixth and Seventh Avenues, belonging to the late Mrs. Douglas Cruger. The advantages of this house are enumerated in the Annual Report, May, 1873, as follows: "This is a large building, measuring seventy-five feet front by eighty-five feet deep, and capable, with a few alterations, of displaying to advantage not only their present collection, but also the antiquities from Cyprus and such other objects as they may desire to obtain for a loan-exhibition. It is near enough to important thoroughfares to be easily accessible, and is surrounded by spacious grounds, with a frontage of 225 feet on Fourteenth Street, upon which grounds new galleries may be built, should they be required, before the final settlement in Central Park. The main house is substantial and elegant in its external appearance; and the halls, apartments, and staircases are large and amply lighted. There is a well-built coach-house near the house, which can easily be converted into a picture-gallery of about the same dimensions with the old one. The mansion itself contains a gallery lighted from the roof; and the whole establishment will afford, if

necessary, five times as much wall-space as is supplied by the present building in Fifth Avenue." This was leased April 25, 1873, for five years at an annual rent of $8,000, though the lease of the Dodworth Building did not expire until May 1, 1874. "The Douglas Mansion in West Fourteenth Street is still standing, not greatly altered in either its outward appearance or interior arrangement. . . . It is occupied by the Training School of the Salvation Army, whose National Headquarters, a nine-story fireproof building, 75 feet wide, adjoins it on the East, built upon a part of the 'spacious grounds' referred to by the Trustees of the Museum in their Report."[1]

The expenses of the Museum were now heavy. Most of the $250,000 raised had been spent for the purchase of works of art. The appropriation of $500,000 for erecting the building in Central Park was of no immediate help, as a gallery must meantime be leased. The Trustees, arguing that the legislators by their former appropriation had put themselves on record as responsible for providing a place to exhibit the Museum collection, memorialized the Legislature for the sum of $30,000 to be supplied in 1873 by the tax levy for the rent and other necessary expenses of exhibiting collections which would be virtually free to the people, "as important and beneficial an agent in the instruction of the people as any of the schools or colleges of the city," and "afford the most refining and at the same time innocent recreation for the public." The act, as passed by the Legislature, enabled the Park Department to apply annually a sum not exceeding $30,000 for the maintenance of both museums, thus securing for the needs of each Museum but $15,000.

The financial situation necessitated what the officers

[1] William Loring Andrews. The Home of the Museum in Fourteenth Street, in Museum Bulletin, Vol. 2, page 4.

considered a merely temporary expedient, contrary to their policy and to their wishes, the charging of an admission fee. At first the price of admission was fixed at 50 cents, but in three months this was reduced to 25 cents and Monday was made a free day. This seems to have continued the

THE DOUGLAS MANSION
128 WEST FOURTEENTH STREET

price during the remainder of the occupancy of the Douglas Mansion, but hours of opening and free and pay days were subjects that came up for frequent discussion. With May 1, 1875, two days, Monday and Thursday, were made free days. The annual reports chronicle the satisfaction that the Trustees of the Museum felt in the way this opportunity was used. "The public," says the Report of 1875, "has signified its appreciation of the additional privileges by a constant, large, and ever crowded attendance on those days. The average daily attendance on free days has been 577."

Less successful was the experiment of opening the Museum in the evening, to accommodate those engaged in business. For three months, from February to May in 1874, the Museum was open from 7 o'clock to 10 o'clock Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday evenings, but the attendance was insufficient to meet the expenses. However, the renewed clamor to have the Museum collections available in the evening led to a second attempt which proved equally discouraging, though this time Monday and Saturday evenings were selected and the former was made a free evening. Even after the Museum had taken possession of its permanent building admission hours and fees were for years mooted questions. Fifty cents was originally charged in the Park, but as before for only a few months, since it was discovered that about two-thirds of the people who came on pay days went away again when they found the entrance fee so high. Monday and Tuesday were the first pay days in the Park. William C. Prime, in a letter to Gen. Cesnola in 1880, suggested making Monday a 25c. day and Tuesday a 10c. or even a 5c. day. This experiment in bargain days was not carried out, but Tuesday was later made a free day and Friday a pay day.

Another method of increasing the funds immediately available for Museum expenses was by forming a new class of membership, annual members, who by the payment of $10 each year should be entitled to a ticket admitting two persons whenever the Museum was open and invitations to all receptions given by the Officers of the Museum. In response to this appeal to men whose sympathy was with the Museum, but whose means would not permit their becoming Fellows or Patrons, about 600 annual members were enrolled.

The Museum was now free to adopt the policy the Trustees had long advocated, that of holding loan exhibitions.

They had sufficient room and were to occupy one building long enough to make loan exhibitions thoroughly practicable. The first catalogue of a loan exhibition of paintings, issued

THE DOUGLAS MANSION
VIEW IN THE GALLERIES
FROM THE PAINTING BY FRANK WALLER

in September, 1873, contains 112 entries. The paintings filled two galleries, Gallery H of Modern Paintings, markedly of the European schools, with only a scattering representation of American artists, and Gallery G of Old Masters. Among the first we note Turner's Slave Ship, now in the

Boston Museum of Fine Arts, lent by John Taylor Johnston, and Head of a Young Man, by James McNeill Whistler, lent by Samuel P. Avery; among the second, paintings attributed to Titian, Tintoretto, Ghirlandajo, Andrea del Sarto, and Leonardo da Vinci. The lenders, 32 in number, include such well-known collectors as John Taylor Johnston, Morris K. Jesup, J. H. Van Alen, Robert Hoe, Robert L. Stuart, Robert L. Kennedy, William T. Blodgett, H. G. Marquand, and R. M. Olyphant; such artists as Frederic E. Church and John La Farge; and one daughter of an artist, Miss Morse, who lent some of her father's works, as well as paintings by European artists.

Another of these early loan exhibits recalls the days of the New York Gallery of Fine Arts, for it was a collection wholly American in character, a memorial exhibition of 38 paintings by John F. Kensett, his last summer's work, and the three paintings, The Cross and the World, by Thomas Cole. The Kensetts, given to the Museum by Thomas Kensett, afforded an opportunity to appreciate the ability and astonishing industry of the artist, who had been a valued associate in the Museum counsels until his death in December, 1872.

Subsequent loan exhibitions in the Fourteenth Street building included statuary as well as paintings; engravings, etchings, and mezzotints, belonging to James L. Claghorn of Philadelphia; arms and armor and other objects, lent by H. Cogniat; pottery and porcelain, the property of Samuel P. Avery and William C. Prime; laces and embroideries,[1] lent by Andrew MacCallum and the Castellani Collections of antiquities and majolica. The last two were deposited in the Museum for public exhibition in the hope that suffi-

[1] These consisted of "a number of early sixteenth century Italian embroideries — drawnwork, cutwork, colored drawnworks in silks, in part from the Grecian Islands under the dominion of Venice, and fragments of the transitional punto in aria."

cient interest might be awakened in them to effect their purchase by private subscription. In the first case, this hope was fulfilled, and the laces, purchased in 1879, largely through the generous contribution of one friend, became the nucleus of the present collection, one of the largest in existence; in the second case, the purchase was not consummated, owing partly to the financial depression of 1877, and partly to the feeling that the price asked was excessive. The Castellani Collections had been exhibited at the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, where many lovers of art seeing them had longed to keep such valuable works of art permanently in America. The owner, Signor Alessandro Castellani, agreed to place them in the Museum for the first six months of 1877, with the privilege of extending the time till the end of the year if the Trustees so wished, on the understanding that the Trustees should make an effort to procure funds for their purchase. The proceeds of the exhibit and the sale of catalogues were to be divided equally between Signor Castellani and the Museum. If, however, either collection was finally purchased, whatever had already been given to Signor Castellani should be deducted from the purchase price. After exhibiting the collections nearly a year the Trustees reluctantly abandoned all hope of ownership and shipped them back to Europe.

Besides these different collections, individual works of art of many sorts were lent for shorter or longer periods. A general guide to the rooms, issued probably in 1875, gives us some conception of the varied character of the exhibits, both those lent and those owned by the Museum. For this reason it seems worth copying in part.

GROUND FLOOR

Entrance Hall

Antique and Modern Statues and Busts.

East Side of Entrance Hall

Room A (front), †Cesnola Collection ; Pottery, Bronze Articles, etc.

" B (center), †Cesnola Collection; Pottery.

" C (back), " " "
†Cases of Greek Vases.

West Side of Entrance Hall

Room L (back), Loan Collection; Wood Carvings, Old Printed Books, etc.

" M (center), †Reproductions of Works of Art in the South Kensington Museum, London.

" " †Copper Plates Engraved for Audubon's "Birds of America."
Loan Collection Electrotype of the Milton Shield (original in the South Kensington Museum); Wood Carvings, etc.

" N (front), Loan Collection; Pottery and Porcelain, from the Trumbull-Prime Collection; Sèvres, Dresden, and other Porcelain.

" " †Ancient Peruvian Pottery; Paintings, the "Nine Muses."

Gallery of Sculpture (South of Entrance Hall)

†Cesnola Collection; Statues, Statuettes, etc.

†Sarcophagus (Roman) from Tarsus.

Loan Collection; Sarcophagus from Golgos, Cyprus.

Room leading from Gallery of Sculpture to Picture Gallery

†Cesnola Collection ; Sarcophagus, Statues, Bas Reliefs, Stelae with Inscriptions, etc.

Loan Collection; Bas Reliefs from Cyprus.

†Paintings by Old Masters.

Picture Gallery

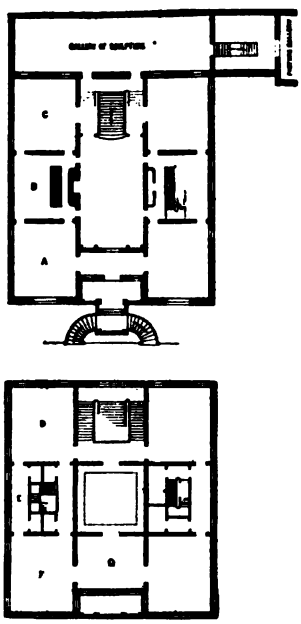
†Paintings by Old Masters.

A Series of 10 Etchings by Jacquemart, from some of the

† Property of the Museum.

most Valuable of these Paintings, for sale at the Museum. Price, $25.)

Loan Collection; Bronze Bust of William Cullen Bryant.



PLAN OF ROOMS IN THE DOUGLAS MANSION

FIRST FLOOR

East Side

Room D (back), Loan Collection; Porcelain, Ivory Carvings, Enamels, Bronzes, Lacquers, Paintings, Papers, etc.; chiefly Japanese and Chinese.

" E (center), †Cesnola Collection; Objects in Stone, Terra Cotta, etc.

" F (front) †Cesnola Collection ; Ancient Glass, Articles in Gold and Silver; Cypriote Inscriptions on Stone.

† Property of the Museum.

Room G (center, front), Loan Collection; Paintings by Old Masters.
†Photographs, etc.; (Revolving Stand).
" H (Picture Gallery), Loan Collection; Modern Paintings.

West Side

Room I (front), †Kensett Paintings.
Loan Collection; Carvings, Enamels, Miniatures, Antique Watches, Coins, etc.
" J (center), Loan Collection; Arms, Armor, etc.
" K (back), Loan Collection; Oriental Porcelain from the Avery Collection; Ivory Carvings, Enamels, Lacquers, etc.

The first year of loan exhibitions demonstrated two facts without question: first, that the number of valuable works of art, both ancient and modern, in private hands in New York and throughout the country was so great that the Museum, even in its larger quarters, could exhibit but a small part of them; and second, that the American collector, whether a member of the Museum or not, was most generous and public-spirited in lending his treasures.

The year 1876, the centennial year of American independence, was noteworthy as well in the history of art, for then occurred the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, which produced an artistic quickening, a growing appreciation of art over the entire country. With this exhibition the Trustees of our Museum were in heartiest accord; and when in the spring of 1876, a circular letter, signed by Parke Godwin, proposed a Centennial Summer Exhibition of New York's private collections of art, on the principle that New York ought to furnish to the many visitors of the

† Property of the Museum.

centennial year more than its ordinary sources of entertainment, the Museum was very ready to coöperate. In this exhibit the National Academy of Design united with the Museum; common committees were appointed; part of the pictures obtained — 580 in number, from 58 contributors — were shown in the Museum and part in the Academy of Design; when the proceeds were divided the two organizations shared the profits, the Museum receiving 40%, the Academy 60%. During the 220 days approximately that the exhibition was open, from June 23rd to November 10th, the paying admissions amounted to 154,441; the catalogues sold, to 46,033; and the net proceeds to nearly $38,000. To both institutions the financial help was very timely. A perusal of the catalogues of the two exhibits discloses the names of the usual contributors to loan exhibitions. As each lender's group of paintings is kept separate, a good opportunity is afforded to see what in each case was thought worthy of a place in an exhibition that was to convey to people from all over the country some conception of the status of art in the homes of New York. In both exhibitions, in the National Academy of Design as in the Metropolitan Museum, only about one-fourth of the paintings were the work of American artists and the remaining three-fourths were by modern European artists, English, French, and German.

Two years before, in 1874, the Cesnola Collection had been acquired by the Museum through the subscriptions of many public-spirited citizens. General Cesnola himself had arranged and classified the collection, and had returned to Cyprus for further excavations, so far as his consular duties would permit. His success was even greater than his most sanguine expectations. In 1874, he sent to the Museum a fine collection of gold ornaments and gems of Phoenician and early Greek workmanship, in this line the entire result

of his excavations. For this collection Mr. Johnston, the President of the Museum, advanced the purchase price, which was later repaid to him. To General Cesnola in his continuance of the excavations, further reward came in the discovery of what was called the Curium Treasure, supposed to belong to a period at least 650 years before Christ, found forty feet beneath the present surface of the ground, under the Temple of Curium, evidently in the treasure vaults of the temple.

As the Museum had been financially unable to make any agreement with General Cesnola, he was compelled to seek a purchaser abroad. The French government offered him 300,000 francs or $60,000 in gold for the Curium Treasure and a selection of the other objects; the British Museum offered £10,000 or $50,000 in gold for the Curium Treasure only, and desired an answer to its offer within three days. General Cesnola offered to sell it to The Metropolitan Museum of Art for the same sum, agreeing to payment in instalments of $20,000 each. At a special meeting of the Trustees, a sudden determination was reached to appeal to the friends of the Museum for help in this crisis. The response to the appeal was instantaneous. Within a few days $40,000 was pledged, and the entire collection was secured for New York. By a succession of cablegrams which passed within ten days between John Taylor Johnston and General Cesnola, the purchase was made. Upon the receipt of Mr. Johnston's last cablegram, "We accept entire collection," General Cesnola replied in words that show his strong personal interest in the Museum, "All right! three hearty cheers for our dear New York Museum." Certainly the generosity of General Cesnola is obvious throughout the transaction.

During this part of the Museum's existence it was developing the many-sided interests of an important institution of

art. For example, it was entering into fraternal relationship with other museums. In 1874 the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington gave a series of photographs of objects in that gallery to The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and received in return a series of the etchings made by M. Jules Jacquemart, and photographs of the Museum collections. Annual reports were exchanged with various other institutions, as the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Finding tariff regulations a hindrance to the acquisition of works of art, the Trustees corresponded with other societies to secure by unanimous action, if possible, the admission of all articles over fifty years old free of duty.[1]

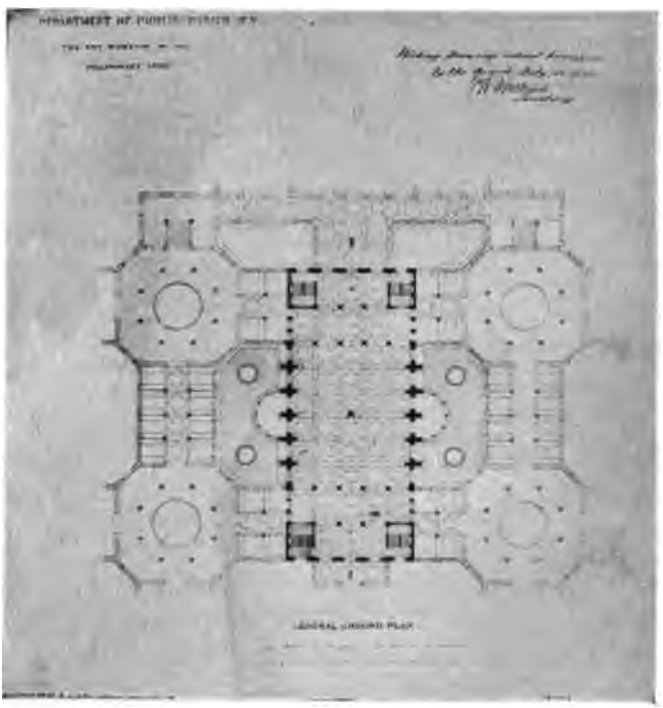
Again, the initial steps toward a photographic department were taken through the generous offer of Messrs. Prime and Hoe to furnish photographs of ob ects in the Museum at their own expense, on the agreement that all profits on the sale should be devoted by them to a fund for the purpose of increasing the stock of photographs. When they deemed the supply of negatives sufficient, the original cost was refunded to them, and the photographs sold for the benefit of the Museum. An agreement was also entered into with Messrs. Tiffany and Co., giving them the exclusive right to manufacture reproductions of works of art in the Museum.

[1]Apparently no definite results followed immediately upon this attempt to secure concerted action for the improvement of tariff regulations. However, works of art, regardless of their age, when imported by certain institutions, were admitted free of duty subject to certain conditions under the tariff act of 1883 and have been so admitted under the subsequent acts, including the present tariff law of 1909. The tariff enactment of 1883 provided for the free entry of collections of antiquities, while the act of 1890 limited the term antiquities to such articles as were suitable for souvenirs or cabinet collections, and which had been produced prior to the year 1700. This provision was continued in the act of 1894, but dropped from the tariff law of 1897. The tariff act of 1909 now in force divides works of art into two classes and admits without duty one class if over twenty years old and the other if over one hundred years old.

In its educational influence, also, the Museum was accomplishing gratifying results. The students of Cooper Union, the Art Students' League, and the Brooklyn Art Association, and other students of art were given free tickets of admission upon application. This side of Museum work has always been regarded as most important. The Annual Reports repeatedly call attention to its value. In the report submitted in May, 1875, we read, "The Museum has had its effect for good. Several schools have introduced the history and principles of the fine arts into their courses of education. Teachers, accompanied by scholars, frequently visit the Museum to examine illustrations of the immediate subjects of their study, and large numbers of young persons, especially young ladies, are among the most frequent visitors and the most careful students of works of art." In the next report, the pleasure of the Trustees in this phase of the Museum's work is expressed as follows: "The Trustees take especial satisfaction . . . in observing the number of artisans who visit the Museum for gaining instruction in their respective arts. It is also proper to notice the evidence from outside the galleries that the Museum has already produced somewhat of its designed effect in directing the tastes of the community to a higher standard than was formerly indicated. This evidence is found in abundance. Styles of household and home decoration are materially changing in our city and in the country at large. . . . Our citizens are beginning to gather around them objects of artistic beauty for the adornment of the rooms in which they live, and in which their families grow up, and thus children are surrounded by the refining and elevating influences of art. . . . Without falling into the error of claiming this manifest advance in American art-tastes as solely and wholly the result of our work, the Members of The Metropolitan Museum of Art have reason to be satisfied that they have been

largely influential in producing it." Through its guide books and catalogues, also, of which a number had been issued by this time, the Museum was exerting an educational influence.

During this period, as well as the preceding, the duties

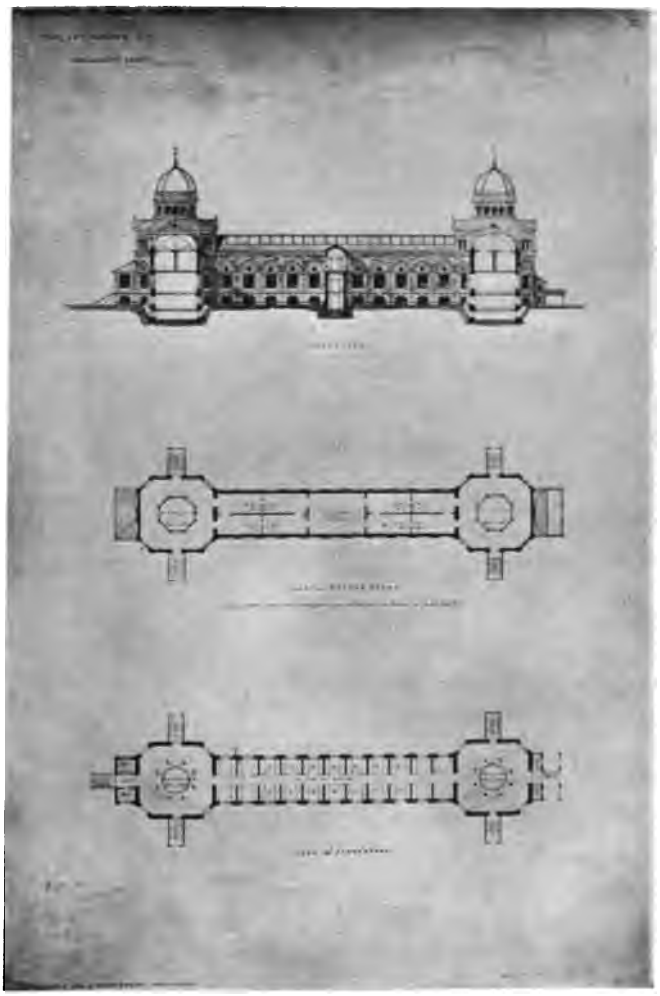


PROPOSED PLAN FOR THE MUSEUM
BY CALVERT VAUX AND J. WREY MOULD

of the Trustees were twofold: those involved in the actual daily conduct of the Museum and those relating to its future welfare; that is, in planning for the erection of the permanent building in the Park. This portion of their work, necessarily done quietly, did not come to public notice, but it took much time and required knowledge, tact, and decision. Calvert Vaux, then employed by the Park Com-

mission, was working on the plans and specifications. The understanding was that Mr. Vaux should be in frequent consultation with the Executive Committee of the Museum and should work in conformity with its wishes. His first plans seemed to the Museum officials far too "magnificent and elaborate," and others which were simpler and less expensive were submitted and accepted. The special committee of architects appointed by the Museum to superintend the building reported suggested changes on the first plans as follows: "Your Committee have always believed, and in published reports have stated that any plan for the Museum should include a Court of moderate size, which should admit of being roofed with glass; that this Court should be not less than 100 feet square and will be well adapted to its purpose if of that size, that the buildings surrounding it should be about 30 feet wide on an average and should have a ground story, the floor of which should be on a level with the floor of the Court, thus making a continuous floor ground or first story 160 or 170 feet square; that this story would afford excellent and altogether satisfactory light, space, and accommodation for Works of Art of all classes other than pictures; that pictures are provided for by the rooms of the second story of the building surrounding the Court, in which rooms or galleries about 1,000 running feet of wall would be provided, all perfectly lighted from above. Now it is obviously of great importance that the building to be erected at once, with the half million already appropriated, should be made to include something of each part of the building: — some picture gallery, some glass-roofed court, and some of the cloister or side-lighted gallery surrounding the court." This report was signed by Russell Sturgis, Richard Morris Hunt, and James Renwick.

The contention of the Trustees — a wise stand, we think — was that the estimate for the building should not exceed



PROPOSED ELEVATION AND FLOOR PLANS
BY CALVERT VAUX AND J. WREY MOULD

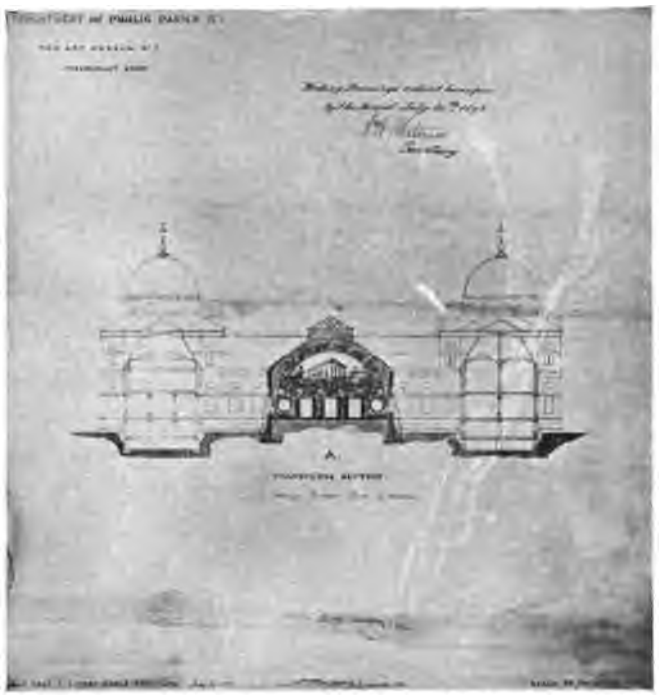
$400,000, leaving $100,000 for the contingencies that must always be reckoned on, and for fitting up and equipping the building for its special use. The Trustees cared far less for exterior ornateness than for interior effectiveness. When Mr. Vaux had changed his plans, the shell of the building was constructed. Even then, the Trustees were compelled to ask for important changes in the interior. Their criticism was not against the building as such, but against its adaptability for the exhibition of their collections. Fortunately, both Mr. Vaux and the Park Commissioners were most cordial in their desire to conform to the wishes of the Trustees. But Museum building was a new form of architectural work in America. Thus it was but natural that differences of opinion should occur, even with the heartiest good will on the part of each person.

The cost of the Central Park building was kept within the half million dollars appropriated, with a slight margin for alterations and additions, but no money remained to pay for moving the collections and fitting up the new building. Accordingly, the Museum must again have recourse to the Legislature. To them application was made to authorize the Board of Estimate and Apportionment to include in the tax levy in 1879 and 1880 sufficient amounts for these purposes By the law passed June 3, 1878, $30,000 was to be appropriated during two years.

Another task for the legal minds among the Trustees was securing from the Park Commissioners a suitable lease of the building the Museum was so soon to occupy. The original draft of this lease was made by Joseph H. Choate for submission to the City authorities. It was duly executed and recorded on December 24, 1878. By this agreement[1] the City of New York was to be regarded

[1] For the wording of the lease, see Charter, Constitution, By-Laws, Lease, Laws, N. Y., 1910, page 31.

as the sole owner of the building, which it agreed to keep in repair except if damaged by fire; the Museum was to have the exclusive use of the building and full and exclusive property rights to all collections in the building. The Museum agreed



TRANSVERSE SECTION OF PROPOSED MUSEUM PLAN
BY CALVERT VAUX AND J. WREY MOULD

on its part to keep the building open from ten o'clock A. M. until half an hour before sunset, on four days in the week, and on all legal or public holidays except Sundays, free of charge, and on the remaining days on such terms of admission as they saw fit, provided that professors and teachers of the public schools of the city or other free institutions of learning in the city should be admitted to

every privilege of the Museum granted to any other persons. By this lease the partnership between the city authorities and the Museum Trustees was fully established. The Museum was henceforth to be a free public institution. The contract was unique in its character and has secured constant harmony and coöperation between the Trustees and the City, and the fact that it has undergone no substantial change in the thirty-four years that have since elapsed is significant proof of its value.

The Trustees were now ready to take active measures for closing the Fourteenth Street gallery, removing the collections to the Museum's own building, and there installing them. February 14, 1879, was made the date of the final reception at the Douglas Mansion and the exhibition there was declared closed. According to a newspaper, there was "a great crowd" and 'a stalwart crush" that evening. The task of safely and systematically transferring the collections from their old quarters to their new home was one of considerable magnitude. Upon General Cesnola, who had been appointed Secretary in 1877,[1] devolved much of the planning and a large share of the performance. His hours were not confined to any stipulated number, but he was at work early and late. In his memorandum of work to be executed in the new building before the removal of

[1] For several years two men, the Assistant Superintendent, H. Gordon Hutchins, and the Assistant Secretary, Thomas Bland, had faithfully conducted the affairs of the Museum as the only paid members of the staff. Mr. Hutchins was employed first as a caretaker and janitor when the Fifth Avenue building was leased, but proved himself so capable that he was made Assistant Superintendent with an increase of salary and continued to hold that office until the appointment of General Cesnola. Some idea of Mr. Hutchins' various duties may be gained from a letter written by Russell Sturgis, which reads, "He has often been employed thirteen or fourteen hours a day, for several days together, in very varied occupations:—answering the questions of visitors, writing, classifying, attaching numbers and labels, and (during the evening and early morning) arranging objects in cases or hanging pictures."

the collections from Fourteenth Street, we find for the Secretary's room, among other furnishings, "curtains to the three windows, gas fixtures," and "to render opaque the lower part of the glass windows to keep curious people from looking inside the room when I am at work." Thus he was preparing for the long hours upon which he was soon cheerfully and eagerly to enter. Recognition of the faithful and

THE FIRST BUILDING IN CENTRAL PARK
FROM AN ILLUSTRATION IN THE DAILY GRAPHIC

gratuitous services of General Cesnola as Secretary came in 1879 when he was appointed to the position of Director, or Manager of the Museum, thus receiving a salary. The Museum now needed a more centralized organization with one man directly in touch with its varied interests. Fortunate indeed were the Trustees to obtain a man whose heart was in his work.

The Trustees also labored long and hard. The buoyancy of their enthusiasm carried them happily through much work that otherwise might have been termed drudgery. One

newspaper writer of the day, recognizing the debt the community owed to a comparatively few men, called the attention of others to their manifold labors as follows:

"Looking over the last annual report of the trustees to the members it appears that the entire number of contributors to the fund, in sums large and small, is only about four hundred; that the contributions have amounted to $325,000, and that the trustees have among themselves given about one-fourth of the whole amount. This is the money account, but the amount of time and attention expended by the trustees can scarcely be summed up. It appears that up to the spring of 1879, when they moved to the Park, the entire labor and supervision had been done by trustees in person, and that this required a large amount of daily work and probably night work as well cannot be doubted. When it is remembered that these gentlemen are well-known business men, each having his own responsibilities and that they have done not only advisory work but have undertaken the personal labor of going around to borrow objects of art for the loan exhibitions, hanging pictures and handling porcelains, glass, etc., paying workmen and doing all the odd jobs, as well as the art work of a growing museum, it may be seen that they are working trustees. The removal of the vast collection of Cypriote potteries, statuary, glass, bronzes, and other objects and paintings and marble statues from the Fourteenth Street Museum to the Park was not only superintended during six weeks by trustees but every separate fragile object was packed at one place and unpacked at the other by the gentlemen themselves, and the result repaid them, for not a vase or cup was broken. It might well be thought that they expect some reward; but the fact is that they have had no other end in view than the satisfaction of accomplishing a great thing for the working-men, artisans, artists, and art lovers in New York. This reward

is theirs. The Museum of Art, considering that it is a result of only nine years' work, is almost a miracle in this age of work for pay."[1]

The facts bear out the statements of this newspaper writer in every particular. For instance, General Cesnola himself packed many of the objects at the Fourteenth Street Building and William C. Prime and William Loring Andrews unpacked them personally at the Museum's own building in the Park. An employee of the Park Department, who had been delegated to act as watchman at the new building, after watching these two Trustees for an hour as they lifted object after object from the moving van and safely deposited them in the large hall, took off his coat and helped.

It may not be amiss to quote what Honorable Joseph H. Choate, one of the Trustees, who gave the address at the opening of the Museum, said on this same point: "I will not call a blush to the cheeks of my associates, who sit around me by telling how they labored and suffered during these ten tedious years to bring to pass the little that this hour has realized. But some of them have poured out their money like water, and each in his degree has given unstinted time and study to the advancement of their cherished purpose.

"Of course, such efforts in a field before untried have not been made without some mistakes. . . . But, if we have committed errors, it has been at our own expense; if time and labor have been wasted, they have been only our own; if money has been misspent, it was our own money and that of a few generous friends, who zealously shared our errors; and here to-day we bring before you the net result of all our labors, all our aspirations, and all our mistakes."

As we read the correspondence and the minutes of the meetings held in those years, we are deeply impressed by the conviction that we, as an institution, possessed something

[1] N. Y. Evening Post, March 19, 1880.

in the initial enthusiasm and joyous service of the founders, those dauntless men who worked for the Museum as if it were the personal possession of each man and its success depended upon him, that the esprit de corps of no staff of men trained in museum work, however faithful and capable, can ever equal.

CHAPTER IV

FIRST YEARS IN CENTRAL PARK

1880–1888

GENERAL LOUIS PALMA DI CESNOLA
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH

CHAPTER IV,

FIRST YEARS IN CENTRAL PARK

1880–1888

THE opening of The Metropolitan Museum building, which marked the end of a nomadic existence lasting ten years, occurred March 30, 1880. "'Can you believe it?' cried one dignified trustee to another, slapping the other heartily on the back. 'Can you realize that the thing really exists?'" This incident, quoted by a New York newspaper[1] as occurring at the opening, may well have been true and perhaps duplicated many times, in spirit, at least. It certainly expresses in a popular fashion the glow of satisfaction that must have come to the Trustees at reaching this epoch in the Museum's career. The Museum was, indeed, not a ripened, perfected organism, as the editor of the Evening Post intended to say when the types twisted his phrase into "not a *refined*, perfected organism," a statement for which the editor duly apologized on the following day.[2] Even the building was not finished; it was but a section of the structure as planned, and so was not imposing or prepossessing in external appearance. But what had already been accomplished was so well done as to give abundant promise for the future.

As members of the press were invited to the Museum for a private view on March 29th, the newspapers of March 30th

[1] N. Y. World, March 30, 1880.

[2] N. Y. Evening Post, March 30, 1880.

gave copious expression to a feeling of surprise and pleasure over what had now been attained. The hanging of the pictures especially received much favorable comment, yet it is interesting to note in passing that the trustees, notwithstanding the emphasis they placed on the educational side of Museum work, apparently made no attempt to arrange the pictures according to schools. One newspaper found in the hanging and the collections "brains, beauty, and balance."[1] "The Hanging Committee," said the article, "has done the most remarkable and admirable work ever seen in this country at a public exhibition of paintings. The features of this work are conspicuously two: the system of bold or delicate and suggestive balancings, and the commingling of Americans and foreigners without respect to persons. You walk through the two large western galleries and you feel that American art is not so bad after all, because you see that it stands up like a man by the side of its fellows and neither blushes nor faints. . . . . The eye is really not shocked to find a Gérôme balancing an Eastman Johnson, a Troyon balancing a William Magrath, a Bouguereau balancing a Henry A. Loop. . . . . The most striking of all these balancings, however, is that of the Bouguereau — an upright of a young woman holding her brother in her arms — with Mr. Henry A. Loop's Aenone, in which, it seems to us, the Hanging Committee have done this American artist the nicest turn imaginable and at the same time practicable. For the first time in his life Mr. Loop has the honor of being taken by the hand by a committee of his fellow-painters, led to the side of the ever-popular Bouguereau, and spoken of in public in this wise: 'Ladies and gentlemen, you see before you two estimable men, whose aesthetic aspirations are homologous if not oleaginous. One of them has swung around the world amid the jingling of

[1]N. Y. Evening Post, March 29, 1880.

THE FIRST BUILDING IN CENTRAL PARK (DETAILS)
FROM AN ILLUSTRATION IN FRANK LESLIE'S ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER
DRAWN BY H. A. OGDEN

applause and shekels; the other — is an American. See for yourselves now how like brothers they are; how each one of them, as it were, bears the same strawberry mark. If, then, you buy Bouguereau, why not order a sample of the other also?'"

In addition to the pictures owned by the Museum there was exhibited a representative collection of fifty-five of the works of the late William M. Hunt, borrowed from all parts of the country, many of them previously shown in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Among these were the study for his Flight of Night, as made for the Capitol in Albany, which has recently been purchased by the Museum, and the Girl at a Fountain, bequeathed to the Museum in 1908 by Miss Jane Hunt. There had been gathered also a loan collection of over two hundred and fifty pictures, lent by nearly a hundred people. "At a time," says the Evening Post, "when the very term 'loan collection' is a bee in picture-owners' bonnets, it [the Museum] has succeeded in stirring deeply the generosity of that troubled class of mortals, and has organized an exhibition extraordinary for beauty, for costliness, and for excellence."[1] William H. Vanderbilt, then in Europe, telegraphed to the trustees that they might help themselves to any ten pictures in his house, and as Samuel P. Avery is quoted to have said, "You may be sure we took the best he had."[2] The ten chosen were Jacque's Shepherd and Flock, Dupré's Landscape, Diaz' Forest of Fontainebleau, Lefebvre's La Sposa di Torrente, Villegas' The Rare Vase, Erskine Nicol's Looking for a Safe Investment, Madou's Flemish Cabaret, Corot's Dance of the Nymphs, Meyer von Bremen's What Has Mother Brought?, and Van Marcke's Cattle. Since 1886 most of these and many other paintings have been exhibited in Gallery 16 as a loan from George

[1] N. Y. Evening Post, March 29, 1880.
[2] N. Y. World, March 30, 1880.

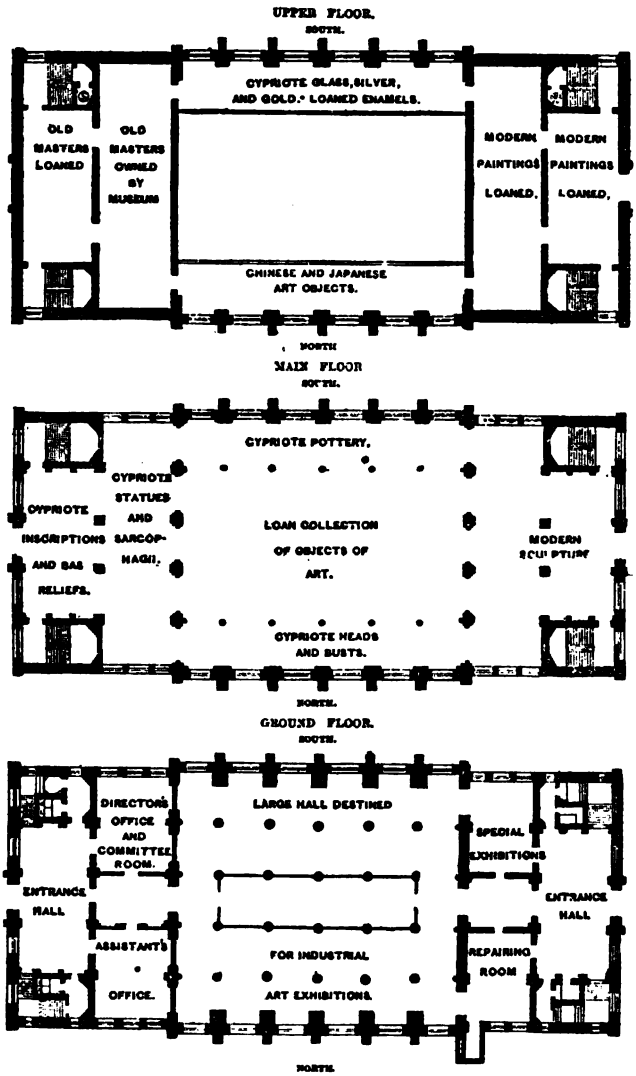
THE FIRST BUILDING IN CENTRAL PARK (INTERIOR VIEW)
FROM AN ILLUSTRATION IN HARPER'S WEEKLY

W. Vanderbilt. Approximately three-eighths of the paintings lent were by American artists; the remaining five-eighths, by representatives of various European schools of painting.

To get a glimpse of the Museum as it looked when ready for the opening, turn to another newspaper clipping. "Near the eastern end of the main hall, under that immense roof which from the outside is so suggestive of a hothouse, is seen first of all a modest platform, on which are modest little camp-chairs for the distinguished guests of to-morrow, and a modest little box-desk for those of them that are to speak. Sit on one of these chairs, and at your right and left appear long rows of glass cases containing loaned curiosities in porcelains, manuscripts, missals, gold ornaments, repoussé and chased work, carvings, bronzes, Limoges enamels, and what not. Behind them are larger glass cases with their Cypriote antiquities — the pottery of ancient Cyprus, the statuary of ancient Cyprus. The specimens have room enough now, and they look comfortable. From the long southern and northern galleries depend tapestries old and resplendent; while in one of the galleries is the Avery Collection of porcelains and in the other the Cypriote glass and gold, the most iridescent pieces of glass being hung where their effect is undisturbed. Chinese ivory carvings, Venetian glass, and Eastern lacquer ware and curios arrange themselves in cases by themselves. You can take any standard work on Cyprus, Greece, Italy, or Japan, and pick out your own illustrations for it in the Metropolitan Museum."[1]

The plans for the opening day included a reception and luncheon given at one o'clock by John Taylor Johnston at his home, 8 Fifth Avenue, and the ceremony of opening at 3.30 P. M. at the Museum. For the latter 3,500 invitations had been issued, and many more requests had been received. Long before the hour for opening, a throng stood shivering in

[1]N. Y. Evening Post, March 29, 1880.



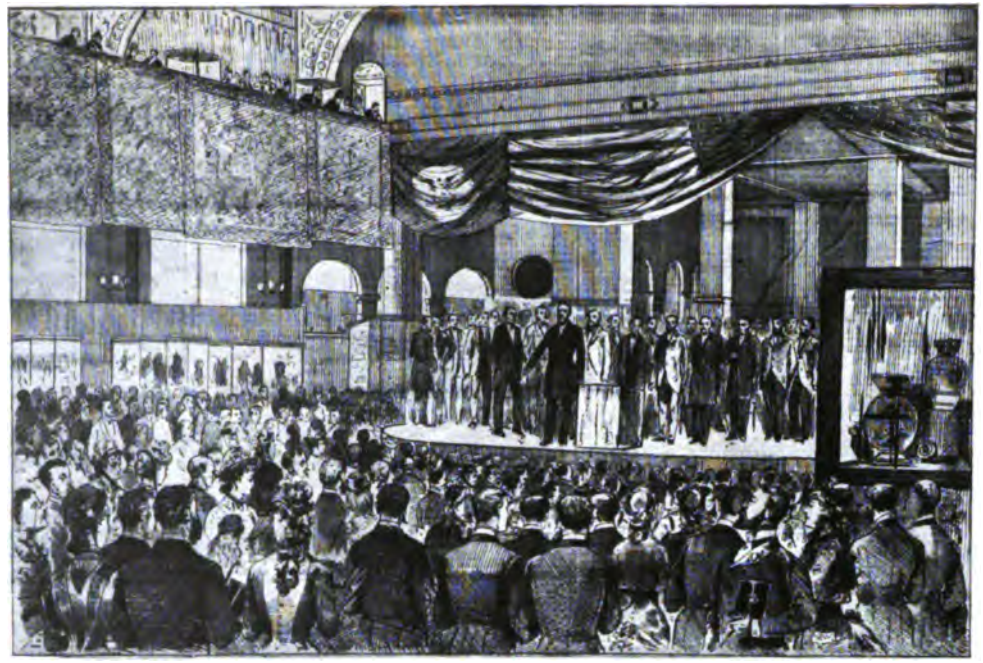
THE FIRST BUILDING IN CENTRAL PARK
FLOOR PLANS

the chill March wind, waiting for the doors to swing back. The exercises consisted of prayer by Henry C. Potter, D. D., then Rector of Grace Episcopal Church, later Bishop of New York; the delivery of the Building to the Trustees, by the President of the Public Parks, James F. Wenman; the acceptance of the Building on behalf of the Trustees, by John Taylor Johnston; an address on The History and Future Plans of the Museum, by Joseph H. Choate; and the declaration that The Metropolitan Museum of Art was open, by the President of the United States, Rutherford B. Hayes. "The formal proceedings throughout," said The Evening Post, "were notable for the absence of all the vainglory and boasting which are sometimes thought to be inseparable from Yankee oratory, the modest, simple, and yet sufficient words in which President Hayes declared the institution to be open for the purposes of 'free, popular art education' being in entire accord with all the preceding exercises."[1]

Mr. Choate's address is worthy of a careful reading. Its dominant note is the practical value of a museum of art to all the people, its truly public character. The following paragraphs state most clearly this position of a representative trustee:

"The erection of this building, at the expense of the public treasury for the uses of an art-museum, was an act of signal forethought and wisdom on the part of the Legislature. A few reluctant taxpayers have grumbled at it as beyond the legitimate objects of government, and if art were still, as it once was, the mere plaything of courts and palaces, ministering to the pride and the luxury of the rich and the voluptuous, there might be some force in the objection. But, now that art belongs to the people, and has become their best resource and most efficient educator, if it be within the real

[1]N. Y. Evening Post, March 30, 1880.



OPENING OF THE FIRST BUILDING IN CENTRAL PARK
FROM AN ILLUSTRATION IN THE DAILY GRAPHIC

objects of government to promote the general welfare, to make education practical, to foster commerce, to instruct and encourage the trades, and to enable the industries of our people to keep pace with, instead of falling hopelessly behind, those of other States and other Nations, then no expenditure could be more wise, more profitable, more truly republican. It is this same old-fashioned and exploded idea, which regards all that relates to art as the idle pastime of the favored few, and not, as it really is, as the vital and practical interest of the working millions, that has so long retarded its progress among us.

. . . . . .

"The founders of this Museum, stimulated by the wise examples set them abroad, and conscious at the same time that whatever was to be done for art among us must be begun, at least, by private means and personal enterprise, projected the undertaking whose progress you have to-day been invited to witness.

"They knew the difficulties that lay before them, and fully appreciated the burdens which they volunteered to assume. They looked for success only to the far-distant future, and certainly never expected in so short a time to accomplish the half of what has already been done. Let me briefly state to you their purposes. They believed that the diffusion of a knowledge of art in its higher forms of beauty would tend directly to humanize, to educate, and refine a practical and laborious people; that though the great masterpieces of painting and sculpture which have commanded the reverence and admiration of mankind, and satisfied the yearnings of the human mind for perfection in form and color, which have served for the delight and the refinement of educated men and women in all countries, and inspired and kept alive the genius of successive ages, could never be within their reach,

yet it might be possible in the progress of time to gather a collection of works of merit, which should impart some knowledge of art and its history to a people who were yet to take almost their first lesson in that department of knowledge. Their plan was not to establish a mere cabinet of curiosities which should serve to kill time for the idle, but gradually to gather together a more or less complete collection of objects illustrative of the history of art in all its branches, from the earliest beginnings to the present time, which should serve not only for the instruction and entertainment of the people, but should also show to the students and artisans of every branch of industry, in the high and acknowledged standards of form and of color, what the past had accomplished for them to imitate and excel."

With the collections safely placed and duly exhibited in their permanent home, the days of the Museum's migratory life were indeed well over, but by no means the difficulties and problems of a Museum. Financially their very success in accumulating possessions, the cost of exhibit and care being by no means trifling, and their very occupancy of a city building, good as each was in itself, brought almost insurmountable obstacles. The Museum at 82d Street was too suburban in location to afford opportunity for the close personal supervision and labor that the Trustees had so willingly performed earlier. The expense of maintenance would therefore be increased even in a building no larger than the Fourteenth Street building, and the Central Park building was much larger. Besides, by the terms of the lease the Museum must admit visitors free on four days each week, whereas before there were only two free days. Thus one portion of their income would probably be greatly curtailed. Yet so excellent was the management, so careful the expenditure that from 1882 until 1889, when the first wing was opened, each year closed free of debt.

Hon. Joseph H. Choate at the opening of the building alluded in a pleasing manner to this unpleasant subject: "These Trustees," said he, "are too proud to beg a dollar, but they freely proffer their services in relieving these distended and apoplectic pockets. Think of it, ye millionaires of many markets, what glory may yet be yours if you only listen to our advice, to convert pork into porcelain, grain and produce into priceless pottery, the rude ores of commerce into sculptured marble, and railroad shares and mining stocks—things which perish without the using, and which in the next financial panic shall surely shrivel like parched scrolls—into the glorified canvases of the world's masters, that shall adorn these walls for centuries. The rage of Wall Street is to hunt the Philosopher's Stone, to convert all baser things into gold, which is but dross; but ours is the higher ambition to convert your useless gold into things of living beauty that shall be a joy to a whole people for a thousand years."

The Trustees the year before, in 1879, had issued as a circular a plea for financial help to the extent of $150,000, the subscription to be applied first to the following objects:

"To purchase the Avery Collection of Porcelain, to buy the King Collection of Gems, to purchase Casts, to purchase Architectural Models, to purchase Archaeological Antiquities, to purchase examples of Fabrics, and start a School of Design for the Arts and Trades, to establish a system of Prize-Medals or Awards, to create a fund for Lectures on Art."

This list gives some idea of the various activities upon which the Trustees longed to enter. They were in the tantalizing position of seeing excellent opportunities to acquire treasures of art slip from their grasp through a constant need to economize. Looking ahead, however, we find that some, at least, of these desires were gratified. The Avery

Collection of Porcelain was bought this same year, though the subscription was insufficient to pay the full price. Samuel P. Avery for his part gave most generous terms for its purchase. The Collection of Engraved Gems, made by Rev. C. W. King of Trinity College, Cambridge, England, together with Mr. King's descriptive catalogue, valuable because the work of a well-known authority on glyptic art, was acquired in 1881 through the gift of John Taylor Johnston. Richard Morris Hunt, who was especially interested in the third object, the purchase of casts, at different times made generous contributions of architectural casts.

Two items in this list focus our attention on a subject that the Trustees had for several years thought worthy of most serious consideration, that of exhibiting a collection of the objects belonging to industrial art and establishing industrial art schools. The large hall on the lower floor of the new building was set apart for carrying out their pet scheme, procuring and exhibiting "specimens illustrating the progress of manufactures and methods of manufacture from the raw material to the final art product." So determined were the Trustees upon this use of the space that at the opening of the building on March 30, 1880, they suspended in the hall a large placard with the inscription, "This room will be devoted to the collection of industrial art." The task of filling this room was assigned to Professor Thomas Egleston, of the School of Mines, Columbia University, but it proved less easy in performance than on paper. It is illuminating to discover what he strove to obtain. Outlining his plan, Professor Egleston wrote:

"The collection should be commenced by gathering together the materials illustrating the use of the metals for interior and exterior art ornament and decoration. I should propose in each case to have the metal represented by its ores, and the intermediate processes of manufacture, but not

to make these a prominent feature in the collection, only showing them as incidental to the finished subject which should be the center of attraction." Although many concerns were approached and several collections were promised, the sum total actually effected at this time was the acquisition of a series illustrating the art of electrotyping. In fact, in few cases has the Museum since that date acquired objects illustrating the processes of manufacture, although it now possesses in great richness the finished product of the artisan's skill and a special wing built for and devoted to the decorative arts. With the gradual process of differentiation between the objects belonging to an art museum and those appropriately placed in an industrial museum, the earlier ideal, expressed in this effort for an Industrial Art Collection, has given place to the attempt to help artisans through a collection of finished works of art and details that show historical progression from early periods to the present. The aim — to be helpful to artisans — is the same now as then; the difference lies in the method of accomplishing it. It would seem as if the right direction for effort in an art museum was discovered only by a series of experiments such as this. Thus the attempt, though unsuccessful, served a distinct purpose.

The other educational aim, that of establishing Industrial Art Schools, was carried out and the schools conducted for over a decade. Gideon F. T. Reed, "a gentleman of large means, leisure, and experience," living in Swampscott, Massachusetts, who had studied the subject for years, by his financial aid, and Edward Moore of Tiffany and Company by his time and experience made the initial steps possible. The Trustees had pledged themselves to the public in the Annual Report of 1879 to start such schools, and in the next report they were able to record that they had fulfilled their pledge by renting rooms

on the third floor of a building, No. 31 Union Square, at the northwest corner of Broadway and 16th Street, and there establishing in January, 1880, free classes in woodwork and metalwork, each meeting twice weekly in the evening. When announcement of this new school was made by a circular sent to a few employers and workmen, a gratifying number of applicants presented themselves. During the first term the average number in attendance in each class was from twenty to twenty-three, ranging in age from sixteen to thirty years.

With the next year great changes — of location, courses of study, and methods of administration — came to the schools because of Richard T. Auchmuty's generous offer to erect on the east side of First Avenue between 67th and 68th Streets the necessary buildings for a Technical School of plain and ornamental painting (house painting), to give the Museum the use of them rent free for three years, and to pay whatever running expenses the receipts from tuition did not cover. There were classes in drawing and design, modeling and carving, carriage drafting, decoration in distemper, and plumbing. Mr. Auchmuty conditioned his offer on an agreement to charge as tuition enough to cover approximately the expenses of the schools, since he believed that people seldom value what they receive for nothing, and so regularity of attendance could not be secured with free tuition. This arrangement continued only one year, during which 143 persons were enrolled in the different classes. The evening classes were eminently successful; the day classes, not so prosperous.

The schools were continued the following year in another location, on the upper floors of the building, Nos. 214 and 216 East Thirty-fourth Street, a part of the expense being met by an endowment fund of $50,000, the gift of Gideon F. T. Reed.

Though Mr. Reed was averse to dropping the earlier plan of free tuition, he yielded gracefully in a letter written to Robert Hoe, Jr., Chairman of the Committee on Art Schools, which reveals the helpful, unassuming spirit of the man. From this letter we quote: "I have yours of yesterday concerning 'a free' school by 'The Metropolitan Museum.' I do think with yourself, that a small charge is always best (for all institutions of learning) to prevent waste and ensure care and proper appreciation; but can we not just as well leave it a free school and make the charge for materials or some such name and still have the school free? I think that would not be objected to by any one. I feel a little shy about making fees and charges, as that would deter just the young men whom I am most interested in: those who are smart and poor!

"But I do not wish to draw any sharp lines for the Metropolitan Museum — 'tis only to make the future a sure thing, so far as all of us can, i.e., that this fund is to be expended wholly for instruction and as free from charges as is found wisest. Let us all try and encourage others in New York to lend a hand to these schools, by their practical management and certain results, which have worked such wonders for England during only thirty years past! (our boys are no more stupid than they are!) It only depends on us then to educate our boys to do things well."

Until 1887 the schools continued here, increasing yearly in number of pupils and practical efficiency. Elementary classes were added, while the advanced pupils often procured remunerative positions as practical designers. A normal class was started for teachers of drawing in the public schools; the superintendents of schools in the vicinity of New York were sending their teachers to this class, and from Brooklyn, also, applications for tuition for the teachers were received. All these facts indicate the influence that

these Museum schools must have had. The prospectus of 1887 gives the following statement of the general aim and scope of the schools, which by this time employed thirteen teachers, with John Ward Stimson as Director: "These Art Schools have been established . . . with the intention of furnishing superior opportunities (at moderate cost) for thorough instruction in Color; Design; Modeling;

MUSEUM ART SCHOOL, 31 UNION SQUARE
FROM AN ILLUSTRATION IN THE DAILY GRAPHIC

Free-hand, Architectural, Cabinet, and Mechanical Drawing; and such allied fields in Chased and Hammered Metals, Carved Work-tiles, Textiles, etc., as harmoniously combine creative art taste with practical industrial skill, having in view the welfare of that large class of Practical Artists or Artistic Artisans (who are distinguished from 'Amateurs' abroad by the term 'Artistes Ouvriers' or 'Artist-Artisans'), and who as industrious, self-supporting, and tasteful Workers in Art, contribute so essentially to its growth, and form the basis of the nation's artistic wealth."

In connection with the Art Schools, lectures were frequently given. No regular course of public lectures was yet held, although at least one such lecture was delivered for which the Trustees arranged, with the expense borne by a special subscription. This was on the general subject of the explorations at the ruins of Assos, in the Troad, and was given February 16, 1883, in Chickering Hall, by Prof. Charles Eliot Norton, President of the Archaeological Institute of America. This form of public instruction was evidently still in the plan of the Trustees; they were but waiting for a favorable opportunity to carry out their intention.

Turning from one educational factor in the Museum life to another, we may chronicle the modest beginnings of the Museum Library. Some books and pamphlets had accumulated at the Fourteenth Street Building. On their removal to the permanent structure in Central Park, the southwest room of the basement was set apart as a library and fitted up with "neat but durable book-cases" capable of containing from five to seven thousand volumes. The appointment of a librarian who should collect books and solicit donations; in short, boom this new undertaking, was the next task. Happily it was no difficult matter, for one of the Trustees, William Loring Andrews, the distinguished bibliophile and one of the founders of the Grolier Club, who was admirably fitted both by his own knowledge and love of books and by his deep interest in the Museum's success to fill such a position, accepted the responsibility, becoming first Librarian, and later Honorary Librarian, which position he has occupied ever since with great advantage to the Museum. Five hundred dollars, surely not an extravagant sum, was appropriated for the first year's support of the Library.

The first record of this new departure was given in the Annual Report to May 1, 1881, as follows: "An Art

Library for the use of visitors is an essential part of the working plan of the Museum, which hitherto it has not been possible to enter on. The increase of the exhibitions and the necessity of books of reference for the use of the Director and his assistants in preparing catalogues, has led to a more systematic attempt to gather a library. This is now a pressing demand, and to supply the immediate want, the Trustees ask the contribution of Works on Art and kindred subjects. A small beginning has been made. The Librarian reports that on the first of November last the Library contained 64 bound and 132 unbound books and pamphlets. Since that date have been added by gift and purchase 173 bound and 78 unbound volumes, bringing the total number up to 447 books and pamphlets now in the Library. In the meantime we are in daily need of encyclopedias, dictionaries, works on painting, history, sculpture, archaeology, and art in general. Members will probably find in their libraries very many such works, which will be acceptable and valuable for the use of the Museum. Expenditures of this nature are among the constant necessities of such an institution; but the Trustees have been compelled to confine their purchases to the lowest measure of absolute need; the labor of preparing catalogues has been increased and delayed by the necessity of sending to distant libraries in the city for reference. While the present demand is only for a working library for manifest uses, it is hoped that we shall in time possess a library which will serve all the purposes of references, in all departments of Art, of visitors to the Museum."

This appeal to supply the needs of the Library seems to have borne fruit. At least, before 1881 was over, Heber R. Bishop, later a Trustee of the institution, had given the Library an endowment fund of $2,000, which was increased in January, 1883, to $5,000. Mr. Andrews writes of this generous gift, "The feeling of encouragement that this

gift of Mr. Bishop afforded the librarian a quarter of a century ago is still with him, a distinct and pleasant memory."

The Library, the nucleus of which was thus formed, had a growth by no means rapid. The annual income would not permit of extensive purchases, and gifts of books were not offered in such abundance or with such frequency as gifts of works of art. Comparatively few people realized the imperative need of an art library for the well-rounded development of a museum of art. Scattering gifts gave only slight encouragement. In 1885, however, a substantial increase was received from John Bigelow in a collection of about 660 books and pamphlets relating exclusively to Benjamin Franklin. These had been gathered during many years by William H. Huntington of Paris, for twenty years correspondent of the New York Tribune abroad, a man of refined artistic taste, ardor as a collector, and unostentatious generosity, who had also collected and presented to the Museum the many objects — medals, bronzes, porcelains, miniatures, engravings, and prints — relating to Washington, Lafayette, and Franklin, which are known as the Huntington Collection.

At this period bequests of importance began to enrich the corporation. In 1881 S. Whitney Phoenix, an ardent lover of beauty who was numbered among the Trustees, had bequeathed such of his Curiosities, Antiquities, and Works of Art as the Trustees should select. These were valued at $50,000 and so his name now stands among the Museum Benefactors.

In 1883 the bequest of Levi Hale Willard, a New York business man, which amounted to over $100,000, was received by the Trustees. By the conditions of the will this was to be "applied to the purchase of a collection of models, casts, photographs, engravings, and other objects illustrative of the art and science of architecture." This bequest may have

come partly as a result, somewhat remote, of the appeal for funds to buy casts and other works of art which had been issued in 1879. The will required that the collection should be made under the direction of a Commission chosen by the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, with the stipulation that Napoleon Le Brun should be one of this Commission. A posthumous letter to Mr. Le Brun expressed a desire that Pierre Le Brun, the son of Napoleon Le Brun, might make the collection under the direction of the Commission. This letter, dated November 25, 1881, reads in part as follows:

"You are aware that I have long since made a bequest to the Metropolitan Museum of Art of money to be devoted to the founding of a Museum of Architecture to be placed on exhibition in its galleries. It is a subject that has often been discussed between us for years past.

"My object in writing this is to put on record my desire lately expressed to you that your son Pierre be assigned the duty of making the collection under the direction of the Commission designated in my will. He thoroughly understands my views, and is in harmony with them, and I am satisfied would carry them out to my entire satisfaction.

. . . . . .

"If it shall prove that I have done something to cultivate and encourage a popular taste of this grandest of all the arts, I shall be recompensed for what I have done, although I may never know of it."

A report written by Pierre Le Brun throws interesting light upon Mr. Willard's character and his motives in making this disposition of his money. It reads: "Mr. Willard had traveled considerably and was an enthusiastic admirer of the many great works of architecture he had seen. He really believed that art to be the grandest and the most comprehensive of all the fine arts; and it was with the ambition of

doing all in his power to cultivate and encourage a popular taste for it, to help such students as were unable to secure the advantages of travel, and to elevate the standard of American work by presenting choice selections of masterpieces in all styles, that he desired to found an historical Architectural Collection. He wished the Collection to tell a clear, graphic story of the progress of the art from the earliest period to the time of the Renaissance — no important type was to be slighted — neither was the collection to consist merely of fragmentary bits of detail. It should present all the distinctive styles in historical sequence, and in such manner too, as to show their inter-relationships and transitions. It should comprise carefully made, good-sized models of typical buildings, casts of doorways and other minor architectural features, and a complete collection of casts of applied ornament, sculpture, and architectural detail, sets of photographs, and plain and tinted illustrations of engravings."

The bequest was accepted and its terms faithfully carried out. The American Institute of Architects appointed Napoleon Le Brun, Alfred J. Bloor, and Emlen T. Littell as their Commission and Pierre Le Brun as purchasing agent. The Trustees for their part appointed three of their number to manage the fund and pay for the casts purchased by the Commission. Mr. Le Brun made three visits to Europe, going to almost every place where casts might be seen or obtained, and displaying good judgment in his selection. The first casts were exhibited in 1889, and the final report of the Commission to the Trustees handed in in 1894. During these years it brought together nearly all the architectural casts now shown in the large hall, including the "rich assortment of details of all styles and periods, the full-sized sections of the Parthenon, the temple of Vespasian and other Roman temples, the cast of the Monument of Lysikrates,

and the models of the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak, the Parthenon, the Pantheon, and the Cathedral of Notre Dame, which were made expressly for this collection, under the direction of Charles Chipiez, by A. Joly, of Paris."[1]

To Henry G. Marquand, one of the Museum's earliest and most loyal friends, whose generosity we shall have frequent occasion to record, is due the beginning (in 1886) of the collection of sculptural casts, procured by his gift of $10,000. Such a collection Mr. Marquand believed to be the greatest need of the Museum at that time.

Another large bequest was received in 1887 by the will of Catharine Lorillard Wolfe, this time of paintings, a collection ready at once for transference to the Museum. Miss Wolfe has already been referred to as the only woman whose name is found on the first subscription list in 1870. From that time until her death, April 4, 1887, her interest in the Museum was unflagging, and her contributions for the purchase of works of art generous. "Her charities were large in number, generous in amount, catholic in character."[2] Her will indicates her feeling as regards her bequest, which she styles "my entire collection of modern oil paintings, with their frames, and also my water-color drawings with their frames, which paintings include the original portrait of my late father, John David Wolfe, by Huntington, and my own portrait by Alexandre Cabanel." These she gives "with the desire and hope on my part that the same may be had, held, and exhibited by that institution for the enjoyment and recreation of all who may frequent its rooms, and also with a view to the education and cultivation of the public taste for the fine arts."

The terms of Miss Wolfe's will show unusual foresight. She provides for the safety and maintenance of her large

[1] Catalogue of the Collection of Casts, page vii.

[2] Annual Reports, 1871-1902, page 384.

collection, for she expressly requires its exhibition in a fireproof gallery and bequeaths $200,000 as a fund for the judicious care of the paintings and for additions to the collection of "other original modern oil paintings either by native or foreign artists . . . in the departments of art known as figure, landscape, and genre subjects." This new method of giving was most gratefully appreciated by the Trustees, to whom hitherto every new gift, however desirable might be its acquisition, had meant added expense. It brought new hope and courage, thus proving as valuable for its inspiration as for its intrinsic worth. One of the galleries formerly used for the paintings by the Old Masters was set apart for the Wolfe Collection, though in this way some of the permanent collection had to be retired, so crowded was the building.

The first steps toward the formation of an Egyptian collection came in this same period, the nucleus acquired with money from the sale of Cypriote duplicates. The Cypriote antiquities were sold to Leland Stanford, then Governor of California, and the money obtained was used for purchasing antiquities which the Egyptian government considered duplicates for the Museum at Boulac. This arrangement proved most satisfactory, the objects secured being of the highest importance. Among other treasures part of the contents of a dynasty tomb at Gurnet-Murrai discovered with the priest's seals intact by Prof. Gaston Maspero became the property of our Museum. Of this find Prof. Maspero, to whom the Museum has often been greatly indebted for his personal interest and helpfulness, wrote the following enthusiastic account: "This year I have had the good fortune to discover a tomb of the XX dynasty, probably of the reign of Ramses V, which has never been opened before; sarcophagi, mummies, furniture, in short, everything was found still in its primitive place.

It is the first time in sixty years that such a chance has happened to a European, and I make you profit by it. Some of the objects which this rich tomb contained are of high historical importance, as they were hitherto merely known to have existed by monumental records or fragments and no other Museum possesses entire specimens except your Museum and that at Boulac."

Two letters written by John Bigelow contain references to some sort of public opening of this collection early in 1887. One says, "If in town on Saturday, I shall certainly attend the bringing out reception of your Egyptian bud, at 2:30," and in the other, he alludes to the invitations to "'the Opening' of that Egyptian damsel." Mr. Bigelow's letters, we might add, on however trivial or ordinary a subject, always have a certain flavor of individuality. For example, in accepting the Trusteeship offered him, he wrote, "It will always give me pleasure to serve the Museum whether as an Officer or in the ranks; whether on foot or on horseback."

In many respects the most interesting, indeed epoch-making loan collection of this period was that of the works of George Frederick Watts, R. A., of London, held in 1884 and 1885. This was peculiarly important for two reasons: first, it resulted from the urgent request of several gentlemen, by no means all of whom were connected in any official capacity with the Museum, thus showing a more general interest in the works of the greatest living artists than had earlier existed; and second, it was the first time that an invitation had been sent by American lovers of art to an English painter to exhibit here. The difficulty involved in transporting a collection in safety from England to America seemed to the Trustees very great. Their fear that unexpected items of expense would arise is evident in a clause of their first resolution on the subject, "provided no

expenses be incurred by the Museum beyond those of unpacking and hanging and repacking of said pictures."

Mr. Watts with extreme modesty hesitated to accept what he considered a flattering invitation. His letter of acceptance reads thus:

"I scarcely know how to reply to the flattering invitation I have lately received to send some of my pictures for exhibition in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; being afraid the invitation has been sent under very considerable misapprehension, believing the idea must have originated with some sympathizers with my aspirations and intentions who have from their sympathy seen achievement where there has been only effort.

"I have, it is true, felt very strongly that art, losing its great missions, being no longer employed in the service of religion or the state, is in danger of losing its character as a great intellectual utterance; and in working, my efforts have been actuated by a desire to establish correspondence between them and noble poetry and great literature, but I can by no means claim for them more than evidence of that aim. By setting aside considerations of exhibition and money making, I have found myself able to carry on my work in a very independent manner, and have had a considerable number of compositions in hand at the same time, working now upon one, now upon another, according to mood or convenience; and keeping my pictures constantly around me, it has happened that I have often obliterated finished work in order to make some improvement which has remained uncompleted; the result of this habit being that most of my pictures are extremely incomplete. This is comparatively of little consequence in my own gallery, but I cannot think it right to call the attention of the public to things in this state; and I feel most strongly that to justify the presumption of coming before the American

public . . . the works ought at least to have the merit of completion. Also I must add that my work can in no degree be considered as representing any section of the English School, and can have no interest from that point of view."

Extraordinary interest was aroused by this exhibition, and numerous letters and requests were received that the exhibition, which was originally planned to continue from November, 1884, to April, 1885, should be retained for another six months. This extension of time was arranged with the kind consent of Mr. Watts, conveyed in these words, "If my work can help to stimulate a regard for art which, appealing rather to the intellect and finer emotions than the senses, can never be popular, I am too happy in being accepted as a pioneer in such a direction to hesitate, and do willingly consent that they remain in the Museum till October, according to your desire." The interest continued unabated, and even after the announced date of closing, letters and telegrams of inquiry were sent to the Secretary on the hope that the paintings might still be seen. The catalogue issued proved an added attraction, for it contained an account of the methods and aims of the artist and a description of his intentions in the pictures, written by a pupil of Watts, Mrs. E. I. Barrington, and submitted to him for his approval. Of this catalogue an illustrated edition (price 25 cents) and an unillustrated edition (price 10 cents) were issued, and nearly seven thousand copies were sold. It is interesting to recall that for this important loan exhibition the Museum was largely indebted to the initiative of Miss Gertrude Mead, who later became Mrs. Edwin A. Abbey.

From this time on for many years, although the collections were enriched by many valuable loans, neither the annual reports nor the special catalogues nor the minutes themselves contain definite information that the customary

semi-annual loan exhibitions were held regularly. This, however, does not mean that there were no loan exhibitions, but they were held less regularly, it seems. A collection of Dutch and Flemish paintings by Old Masters, owned by Charles Sedelmeyer of Paris, was lent for a short time in the winter of 1886–87 by invitation of the Trustees. The Western Gallery was granted to the Society of American Artists for their eighth exhibition from April 15, 1886, to October 15, 1886, subject to the rules of the Museum, but on the understanding that the selection and hanging of the pictures should rest with the Society. This exhibition was entirely different from any other exhibition in the Museum before or since in two respects; namely, the pictures were understood to be for sale and prizes were awarded for the best paintings. At the end of this exhibition The Glass Blowers of Murano by Charles F. Ulrich, which had received a prize of $2,500, was presented to the Museum.

Whether the omission of the semi-annual loan exhibitions was the result of clearly-defined policy or only an accidental lapse, the records do not show. From the correspondence we judge that the difficulties connected with such frequent loan exhibitions were proving great; to keep them up to standard was indeed hard; besides, room was undoubtedly at a premium in the Museum, and loan exhibitions must often mean temporary removal from exhibition of some of the permanent collection.

In fact, even as early as 1879 when the collections were first placed in their new home, the scarcity of room in the new building was felt to be serious. At the very time that the Trustees were planning for the opening of the Museum in 1880, they were discussing the necessity of an appeal to the Legislature for an appropriation to build a new wing. Never was the building sufficient to hold and exhibit properly the possessions of the Museum, and as the collections

increased, the insufficiency of space grew more noticeably apparent. Although an application was made to the Legislature in 1880, the appropriation on which the first extension was built was not authorized until the session of 1884,[1] an act passed earlier having become inoperative through the failure of the Board of Apportionment to place the amount in the tax-levy. By 1884 the need for enlarged quarters was still greater, as the Willard Bequest meant the addition of objects that require much space for display. This new act provided that the work should be done by the Department of Parks, on plans to be made by the Trustees of the Museum and approved by the Department. This procedure is in marked contrast to the earlier method of work, in which the Park Department made the plans and the Museum approved. Perhaps experience had taught that the plans should be made by the persons most concerned. Theodore Weston, who had been so closely connected with the early history of the Museum, was appointed architect, acting under the immediate supervision of a Committee of the Trustees. Associated with him in this work of designing and planning was Arthur L. Tuckerman, a talented young man, later Manager of the Art Schools. This extension was built to the south, and the new entrance on that side superseded the former entrances on east and west.

But even before this new wing, covering more ground and having a greater floor space than the original building, had been opened to the Museum, the need for some system of departmental organization was obvious. With the transference of the collections to the Park building in 1879, the period of a director-controlled rather than a committee-controlled museum began, and at that time the duties and powers of the Director were definitely outlined. For about

[1] See Charter, Constitution, By-Laws, Lease, Laws, page 45.

three years all the work was done, and well done, by the executive ability and industry of one man, General Cesnola, with a corps of employees hired by the month and one or two young men as his assistants.[1] This arrangement was at best but temporary; the large additions to the collections, the demand for carefully prepared catalogues, the constantly increasing amount of correspondence, the almost infinite detail connected with the receipt of objects as gifts or loans and their proper installation — all demanded a staff of specially trained men competent to make the collections useful to the public. In 1882 Professor William Henry Goodyear was appointed *the* Curator, and his duties were prescribed. Four years later a more systematic division of labor was carefully considered, General Cesnola having made a thorough study of the organization of various European museums, and a plan of departmental organization suggested by that in the British Museum[2] was adopted. Three depart-

[1] One of these young men, Waldo S. Pratt, who served the Museum for eighteen months from 1880 to 1882, reviews his accomplishment in that short period in a list that might well challenge comparison. "I have partly managed three Loan Collections, have arranged two large collections and a number of small ones, have prepared and published eight catalogues, including the Gifford Memorial, and published one (the King gems), have done an enormous amount of copying, listing, filing, and letter-writing for my own department, for the Library, and for the General, have acted for a year as Museum correspondent of the American Art Review, have been a sort of business manager about various small matters. and have been in nearly constant attendance at the Museum."

[2] The departmental organization of the British Museum was a gradual development, as need arose. At the outset three departments were created: Manuscripts, Printed Books, and Natural History. In 1807 Marbles and other Antiquities, together with Prints, Drawings, Coins, and Medals, were made a separate department. Thirty years later the Prints and Drawings were severed from the Antiquities. By 1857 necessity had arisen for a division of the Department of Antiquities into four departments as follows: Greek and Roman Antiquities, Oriental Antiquities, British and Mediaeval Antiquities and Ethnography, and Coins and Medals. Such a division exists to-day, except that the Department of

ments were created, each independent of the other and under the care of a curator,[1] who in each case was responsible to the Director for the faithful performance of his duties. The entire field was divided as follows: The Department of Paintings, under Professor W. H. Goodyear as Curator, was to embrace all the paintings, drawings, etchings, water-colors, engravings, prints, textile fabrics, photographs, and books for exhibition (exclusive of the Museum Library); the Department of Sculpture, under Professor Isaac H. Hall as Curator, all the sculpture, antiquities, inscriptions, jewelry, glassware, pottery, porcelain, and such other objects of art as commonly are termed Bric-à-Brac; the Department of Casts, temporarily under the charge of the Curator of Sculpture, all copies, fac-similes, or reproductions, either in metal, plaster, or any other material, the moulding atelier, and the Art Schools. Professor John A. Paine, an excellent scholar and archaeologist, was appointed Curator of Casts in 1889 and served faithfully until 1906, when the office was abolished in a new departmental arrangement. This plan of departmental organization was in force until Gen. Cesnola's death. As need arose, new departments were created.

Oriental Antiquities has been superseded apparently by the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities. The "Literary Group," represented in the first classification by two heads, Manuscripts and Printed Books, is now cared for under four heads: Printed Books (including Maps and Plans), Manuscripts, Oriental Printed Books and Manuscripts, and Prints and Drawings. The Department of Natural History has been removed to South Kensington.

[1]A sentence in a letter from a gentleman to whom the curatorship of the department of paintings was offered expresses the vague idea of the duties of a curator which many people then had and perhaps some people today. He wrote, "I am largely in the dark as to the duties of Curators. I have all my life been an active man; work has been and is a large part of my existence. I could not stand around the galleries all day long merely looking at the pictures and the men to see that all was well." He evidently apprehended that he would have surplus time hanging heavy on his hands, so little was the important work of a curator appreciated.

This volume should contain some mention of the attainments and the faithful service of Professor Isaac H. Hall, who for many years prior to his appointment as Curator of the Department of Sculpture had contributed liberally to advance the welfare of the Museum. His term of service ended only with his death in 1896. Professor Hall was a man of profound scholarship, the acknowledged leader of American scholars in the Syriac language and literature.

In two details only was the Constitution amended during the years 1880 to 1888.[1] These were to provide for the increase of the Executive Committee from six Trustees besides the Officers, who were ex-officio members, to eight Trustees, and to allow the appointment of a successor to a Patronship or Fellowship not only by the endorsement in the holder's handwriting on the certificate or the last will and testament, as previously, but also by the nomination of the Executor or Administrator of the deceased, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees. The earlier rule by its very strictness had proved objectionable: it could not wisely be followed without exceptions.

During this period two public meetings of intense interest held in the Museum helped to bring it into great prominence. In neither case, however, did the Museum initiate the movement or arrange for the exercises. The earlier was the occasion of the presentation of the Egyptian obelisk to the city of New York on February 22, 1881. This obelisk, the gift of the Khedive of Egypt, had been brought from Egypt by Lieutenant Commander Gorringe of the United States Navy at an expense of nearly $100,000 (which was paid by W. H. Vanderbilt) and erected on a knoll west of the Museum. Commander Gorringe gave to the Museum two of the bronze crabs formerly placed by the Romans at the

[1] For summary of amendments, see Charter, Constitution. By-Laws, Lease, Laws, page 75.

corners of the base of the obelisk when it was carried from its original site, Heliopolis, to Alexandria.

The other event was the unveiling of the Poe Memorial, a monument by Richard Henry Park, presented by the Actors of New York to the Museum on May 4, 1885. According to a printed account of the exercises, "The occasion was one of dignity and impressiveness. The platform for the orators of the day was at the east end of the building. Between four and five thousand people, representative of the intellectual and wealthy classes of the metropolis, and a few pilgrims from other cities, listened with deep and sympathetic attention to the proceedings." At this interesting event, among other features, Edwin Booth, who had at that time an international reputation as a tragic actor, made the speech of presentation; William R. Alger, who was earlier minister of the Church of the Messiah, delivered a commemorative oration; and William Winter read a poem.

These first years as a whole form a period of remarkable growth and development along many lines. The property value of the collections had increased from about $480,000 in 1880 to over two and a quarter million dollars in 1888. The number of members had grown from 714 in 1880 to 1774 in 1888. The collections had received accessions of great number and for those days excellent quality. There were added several collections of great value besides those already mentioned, and many individual paintings of unusual importance. We may briefly name the following collections: old Venetian glass, presented by James Jackson Jarves, perhaps the best American art connoisseur of his day; drawings, donated by Cornelius Vanderbilt; the Charvet Collection of Ancient Glass, given by Henry G. Marquand; etchings by Seymour Haden and Whistler, presented by William L. Andrews; ancient musical instruments, the gift of Joseph W. Drexel; twenty oil paintings, given by

George I. Seney; miniatures, boxes, and other objects in gold, crystal, enamel, etc., presented by the Misses Sarah and Josephine Lazarus; valuable laces, particularly Venice points, the gift of John Jacob Astor shortly after the death of Mrs. Astor and in compliance with her wishes; and Babylonian and Assyrian cylinders, seals, etc., purchased from Dr. William Hayes Ward, who had collected them.

Our account of the first years in the park would not be complete without some reference to the attacks upon the authenticity and consequent value of the Cypriote antiquities which made those years so unnecessarily hard for both General Cesnola and the Trustees, but which resulted in the complete vindication of the authenticity and genuineness of General Cesnola's collections in the Museum. The first publication of the charges, in the Art Amateur for August, 1880, bore the signature of Gaston L. Feuardent, a French dealer in antiques, son of M. Feuardent of the firm of Rollin and Feuardent. The specific charges of restorations intentionally false and repairs purposefully incorrect were related to seven objects; while an eighth charge pertained to the bronzes, which, it was stated, had been provided with an artificial patina.

By the express wish of General Cesnola, and in sympathy with his opinion that an archaeological collection to be of any value must be free from the slightest question of authenticity, the trustees appointed two of their number, John Q. A. Ward and William C. Prime, to associate with themselves three gentlemen not connected with the Board, and so to form a Committee, to discover by an exhaustive investigation the truth or falsity of the statements. The three chosen, gentlemen of special ability, recognized position, and high character, were Frederick A. P. Barnard, LL.D., President of Columbia Un versity, who was made Chairman; Hon. Charles P. Daly, President of the American

Geographical Society, and Roswell D. Hitchcock, President of the Union Theological Seminary and the Palestine Exploration Society. Every possible means was taken to discover the truth. As their report states, "We have invited and received the valuable assistance of well-known sculptors and practical stone-cutters and carvers, have taken the opinion of scholars, have made microscopic, chemical, and other examinations of the surfaces, and have subjected some of the repaired objects to prolonged baths, taken them to pieces, and verified the relation of the fractured surfaces. We have had before us original photographs of the objects, taken at the place of discovery, and at later periods, and abundant evidence of their history down to and during the process of repairing and arranging for exhibition in the present Museum building." As a result of so searching an investigation, the Committee could report that each and all of the charges were "without foundation," and that they found nothing "to cast a shadow" on the reputation of the Cesnola Collection.

This report, dated January 26, 1881, might well seem sufficient to silence all detractors, but not so. Incriminating newspaper articles continued to appear and finally a pamphlet was written in the spring of 1882, by Clarence Cook, an art critic, "one of the group of talented men who did so much to make the New York Tribune a power a generation ago," charging that two statues were "a fraudulent patchwork of unrelated parts." Upon this direct accusation the Executive Committee ordered that the two statues mentioned, an Aphrodite and Eros and a Figure holding a Horned Head, should be removed from their glass cases and placed on the floor of the Grand Hall where they might be approached and examined from all sides in a strong light. "Members of the Museum, the public, and especially editors of public journals, sculptors, workers in stone, scholars, and all persons interested in the truthfulness of archaeological

objects" were "invited to make the most careful examination of the statues." The claim of the Museum was that each was monolithic.

Full advantage of this invitation was taken, and during the following weeks thousands examined the discredited statues. Again every indignity was heaped upon defenseless stone; visitors washed, chiseled, cut, scraped, treated with caustic potash and other chemicals, brushed with wire brushes, and examined microscopically to their hearts' content. Perchance, the end justified the means; at any rate, the verdict was unanimously in favor of the authenticity of the statues. Several sculptors and workers in stone sent unsolicited letters, exculpating completely the condemned statues. Among these were Robert Ellin, Daniel Chester French, Charles Calverley, Launt Thompson, and John Rogers.

But not yet was the controversy ended. In 1880 General Cesnola had "published a brief and total denial of the charges against him and the collection." He had also submitted both to the Trustees and to the Committee of Investigation detailed contradiction of the accusations. Except for these statements, General Cesnola had refrained from defending himself in print. He had listened to the advice of his friends and persisted in a dignified silence, which was most wise, though most difficult. His brief public denial, however, gave sufficient provocation to his opponent, Mr. Feuardent, to bring a libel suit against him. The trial began on October 31, 1883. For months General Cesnola's counsel, Allen W. Evarts, Albert Stickney, and Joseph H. Choate, had been preparing evidence. The trustees loyally supported the Director with their entire confidence and their financial aid. They insisted on bearing the expense of the trial. Hon. Nathaniel Shipman, the presiding judge, conducted the case with great fairness. The jury, on February 2, 1884, "sustained the entire integ-

rity of the Cesnola Collection [and] established the baselessness of each and every one of the charges"[1] against it. General Cesnola's conduct during this trying ordeal was most satisfactory to the Trustees. William C. Prime wrote of it to John Taylor Johnston, "We agree that we have never known a witness present such an unvaried appearance of calm and conscious rectitude." In the Museum files are many letters of sympathy over the trial or congratulation over its issue. Among the writers are such well-known scholars as President Andrew D. White of Cornell University and Professor Charles Eliot Norton of Harvard University; such connoisseurs and art critics as James Jackson Jarvis, Charles C. Perkins, and A. S. Murray of the British Museum; such writers as E. L. Godkin of the Nation and George William Curtis. Time has corroborated the findings of the court. Twenty-five years later, Prof. J. L. Myres, the leading authority to-day upon the art and civilization of Cyprus, now Wykeham Professor of Ancient History at Oxford University, wrote of the Cesnola antiquities, "The collection, which is probably in any case the largest single collection of Cypriote antiquities, contains also a large number of examples of Cypriote art which are of the highest importance for the history and civilization of ancient Cyprus."

[1]Annual Reports, 1871-1902, page 262.

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST ADDITION TO THE BUILDING

1888–1894

HENRY GURDON MARQUAND
FROM THE PAINTING BY JOHN SINGER SARGENT

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST ADDITION TO THE BUILDING

1888 — 1894

FROM one point of view the career of the Museum has consisted of erecting buildings, of adding wing after wing to the building in the Park. Each portion occupied has but shown the need of greater space; almost simultaneously with the moving into larger quarters has come the recognition that these rooms were far from adequate. For example, on December 18, 1888, the first wing was opened, and June 15, 1889, the Legislature authorized the appropriation by the city of $400,000 for the further extension of the building.[1]

The exercises for the opening of the New Building, as it was termed, were held on the afternoon of December 18, 1888, in the old Central Hall, which was thronged by fully 8,000 people. Among those honored by seats upon the platform we note the name of John Jay, whom in a sense we might call the Father of the Museum. The exercises consisted of prayer by Rev. Dr. John Hall, pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church; delivery of the new building to the Trustees by the President of the Public Parks, Hon. J. Hampden Robb; acceptance on behalf of the Trustees, by the Treasurer, Henry G. Marquand; an address to the Members of the Museum, by the First Vice President, William C. Prime, LL.D.; and the declaration that the new building

[1] See Charter, Constitution, By-Laws, Lease, Laws, page 50.

was open, by Hon. Abram S. Hewitt, Mayor of New York City. The speeches were interspersed with singing by the Mendelssohn Glee Club, "who kindly lent their aid to make the occasion memorable."[1] One of their members, James Herbert Morse, wrote the words and Joseph Mosenthal the music for an ode, Of Glorious Birth was Art, which was sung by the club.

Shall we supplement our own simple account of the exercises of that day with a few more ornate sentences from the report in the New York Herald on December 19, 1888?

"The wind whistled through the leafless trees, swept over the bare spaces almost with cyclonic force, and whirled around the tall shaft that had come from the banks of the far-off Nile — Cleopatra's Needle. And yet several thousand people made their way to the scene of the ceremonies.

"First they glanced at the lofty column, the silent monument of bygone ages of civilization, and then hurried into the modern building, which has been styled 'classical Renaissance.' A striking contrast.

. . . . . .

"The ceremonies were held in the large hall of the old part, and the visitors found it well warmed and conveniently arranged for hearing and seeing. There, in the course of the afternoon, rang out the silvery tones of eloquence in praise of art, and echoing through the vast space the delicious harmonies of the Mendelssohn Glee Club. Music, eloquence, and the beauty of the softer sex paid tribute to the most glorious creations of the brain and hand of man.

"The civilization of the Western world, in rich robes of fur and costly fabrics from the loom, brushed by the glistening marbles of the old civilization of Egypt, Greece, and Rome. From many a breathing canvas strange figures in strange

[1] Annual Report, page 423.

costumes looked down upon a demonstration of wealth that bygone ages never dreamed of. The fair face of the Western maiden gazed upon pictures epitomizing the most thrilling, the most dramatic histories of France, of England, and of Italy, of peoples whose deeds were the theme of poet, painter,

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and sculptor — deeds which have no parallel in our own brief history."

John Taylor Johnston the first President of the Museum, whose interest in the Museum never flagged, was unable, by reason of increasing infirmity, to take any active part in these exercises. The Trustees, wishing to honor one to whom the Museum owed so much and to avail themselves of a continuance of his wise counsel, appointed him Honorary President for Life in February, 1889, creating that office by an amendment to the constitution by which any person who has held the office of President for ten successive years may be elected an Honorary President for Life.

The second President was Henry G. Marquand, whose discriminating taste in art, long interest in the Museum, generous gifts to its collections, and intimate knowledge of

its affairs peculiarly fitted him to be a worthy successor to Mr. Johnston.

It was preëminently fitting that Dr. William C. Prime should deliver the address of the day, inasmuch as he had been the First Vice President since 1874. As Mr. Johnston grew feebler, more and more responsibility fell upon Dr. Prime. He had been associated in the most intimate conclaves of the Museum from the very first. Wherever sound advice, scholarly opinion, and self-sacrificing industry were required, he had been foremost in providing these without stint. His clear, decisive mind and splendid common sense are apparent even on a casual reading of his speech. Out of so much that is worthy of being quoted here, those sections that illustrate these traits are purposely chosen.

"It is very pleasant," he said, "to talk about art, as some do, as a kind of goddess, calling into existence paintings, statues, temples, and museums. But art is after all practical work. Her noblest products and her homeliest always did and do cost money, darics, staters, ducats, dollars. That was a wise thought, in the earliest ages of art, of the monarch who recorded on the Great Pyramid the quantity of onions and radishes and garlic consumed by its builders.

. . . . . .

"There are still left some who ask, What is the use of beauty? What is the practical good of increasing art production? How does it pay? The life blood of modern commerce and industry is the love of beauty. This mighty city, its wealth and power, rest on this foundation, trade in beauty, buying and selling beauty. Is there any exaggeration in this? Begin with the lowest possible illustration and ask the questioner, Why are your boots polished black? Why did you pay ten cents for a shine? How many thousand times ten cents are paid every day in New York for beauty of boots. . . . Remove from Western races their love of

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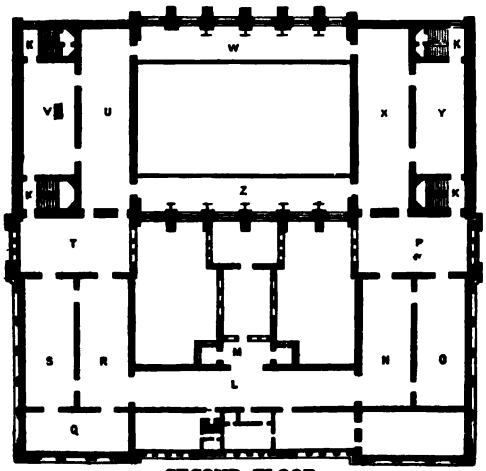
TRIAL SKETCH FOR THE FAÇADE

THE FIRST ADDITION TO THE BUILDING IN CENTRAL PARK
SKETCH FOR THE FAÇADE AS ADOPTED

color, their various tastes in cotton prints, and one factory would supply all the wants supplied by fifty. Consider for one instant what is the trade which supports your long avenues of stores crowded with purchasers, not only in these Christmas times, but all the year around. Enumerate carpets, upholstery, wall papers, furniture, handsome houses, the innumerable beauties of life which employ millions of people in their production, and you will realize that but for the commercial and industrial love of beauty your city would be a wilderness, your steamers and railways would vanish, your wealth would be poverty, your population would starve. Yes, there is money in teaching a people to love beautiful things."

Two sentences spoken that day put into words a very strong feeling abroad at the time that the Museum, to carry out its popular aim, should be open on Sundays. These are a wish expressed by the President of the Department of Parks, "And with that hope may I couple the wish, and in so doing I believe I am voicing the sentiment of a great majority of the people of this city, that the day is not far distant when the Museum will be kept opened on Sundays as well as all other holidays," and the words of the Mayor of the City, Hon. Abram S. Hewitt, "This magnificent addition to the Museum . . . I now declare to be open for the use and instruction and recreation of its citizens forever, and from that everlasting future I trust the time will come when on no day shall they be excluded." These expressions were received with applause by the audience and noted with approval by the daily press.

The question of Sunday opening was not by any means a new problem. Even in 1871 during the first canvass for funds two subscriptions were made only upon the receipt of the following pledge, given in writing: "It is not the intention of the promoters of The Metropolitan Museum of Art



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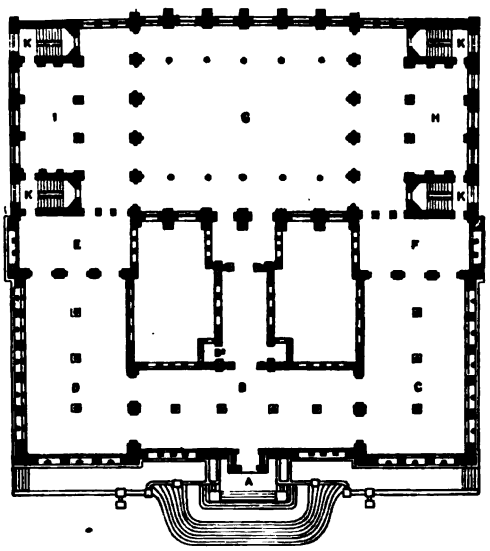

FIRST FLOOR

THE FIRST ADDITION AND THE ORIGINAL BUILDING IN CENTRAL PARK

FLOOR PLANS

ever to open the same on Sundays as a place of amusement. It is distinctly understood that your subscription . . . is made on that condition." In 1880, soon after the occupancy of the park building one trustee, Joseph H. Choate, moved that the Museum should be opened Sunday, but his motion was laid on the table. The next year outside influence was exerted to bring about Sunday opening. A petition signed by over 10,000 persons was sent to the Department of Public Parks, requesting that the two museums, The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the American Museum of Natural History, should open their doors on Sunday. In neither museum were the Trustees ready for the step. So the matter was for several years laid on the table or merely considered, but not acted upon.

Four years later, in 1885, renewed pressure was brought to bear on the officials of the Museums. The Department of Public Parks was heard from again, this time not forwarding a petition, but sending its own request that the Museum be opened on Sunday. The Board of Aldermen took up the matter and sent in a similar request (dated May 20th) with a wording of no uncertain tenor. The Trustees were requested "to open their respective buildings to the public on Sundays, from two o'clock to seven o'clock in the afternoon during the summer months, and from half-past one to half-past four o'clock during the winter months," and further "to act upon this said request without delay, so that the people may have an opportunity afforded them to visit the said museums on Sundays during the early part of the coming summer." The Board of Estimate and Apportionment passed a resolution that it was the sense of that Board that the Museums should be opened to the public on Sunday, and they let it be known that they were not inclined to furnish the annual appropriation, unless their wishes on Sunday opening were

heeded. The newspapers clamored for the same boon. The Central Labor Union and the American Secular Union were alined on the same side. Lengthy rolls of names and carefully prepared lists of reasons were forwarded to the common committee of the two Museums that had the matter under consideration.

The petitions, however, were not entirely on the side of Sunday opening. The American Sabbath Union, the Presbytery of New York, The Ladies' Christian Union, The New York East Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, many of the clergymen of all denominations, in short, those who feared the introduction of an entering wedge toward the Continental Sabbath, passed resolutions and signed petitions against Sunday opening.

Burdened by this weight of argument pro and con, the Trustees were still less decided what to do. For one thing, the members of these boards were far from united in a desire for so radical an innovation. Some had serious religious scruples against such breaking of the Sabbath, as they considered it; others opposed opening on prudential grounds, because they believed it would array many influential persons against the museums and materially diminish their incomes. Still a third group earnestly advocated the measure. President Morris K. Jesup, of the American Museum of Natural History, who was seriously opposed to the step, spoke for both museums, on October 30, 1885, before the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, presenting certain difficulties in the way of opening the Museums on Sunday. This speech was later issued in pamphlet form and distributed. The widely differing opinions of equally earnest, public-spirited men may be well appreciated by reading two letters written in 1885 by two Trustees of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. The position of the opponent on purely prudential grounds is conveyed in the following sentences: "There is

but one consideration which it seems necessary to appreciate for a reasonable determination of our duty as Trustees.

"This question is not one of mere policy. Men and women have deep-seated opinions on it. All religious questions are apt to be viewed with strong feeling. Religion is a controlling motive. Thousands of good, accomplished, wealthy, influential, learned people will set their faces sternly against any institution which opens its exhibitions on Sunday. It is idle to discuss whether they are right or not. It is no one else's business whether they are right or not. We are simply bound to recognize he fact. I believe that all our public educational and charitable institutions derive four-fifths of their support from religious people who hold strict views about Sunday. Without pressing that proportion, it will be admitted by all that our Museum derives a large part of its support from such men and women. Also that our members and our board of Trustees are divided on the subject, very many of them being on principle opposed to Sunday exhibitions.

"The adoption of Sunday exhibitions will therefore divide us, and drive from the Museum some at least of its supporters. It will array a large part of the religious press directly against the Museum forever. There is no compromise with the religious editors and the religious people who hold the Sunday strict views. They will regard it as a duty to do all in their power to destroy the institution which they regard as desecrating Sunday, and exerting an immoral influence on the community, and holding such views they are right in so doing. It is pure folly to ignore these facts.

"We now command the hearty undivided support, 1st, of our own board, who work with perfect unanimity; 2d, of our membership; 3d, of the whole mass of the educated, intelligent people of all religious sentiment. It is suggested by the Park Department that we now change our plans, disregard

the strong religious sentiment of a part of our supporters, and array a powerful press and a powerful clergy against us. If such a state of affairs existed and such a proposal were made to a business corporation, whose Directors were utterly irreligious men, caring nothing about Sunday, they would not listen to it for a moment. Common sense and ordinary business foresight would forbid its consideration."

The views of an ardent advocate are contained in the following letter: "For one I am most earnestly in favor of immediately trying the experiment of opening both Museums on Sunday after 1 P. M. and I think we shall be false to our trust if we do not.

"First. On religious grounds — in obedience to the commandment to make the day a day of rest and recreation. To many jaded people of the city there can be no more complete rest than a quie hour in either Museum. A dull sermon cannot compare with it.

"Second. On moral grounds — that a counter attraction in all respects pure and wholesome may prevail over the corrupt inducements of places of dissipation, as it certainly will.

"Third. On prudential grounds — the people are the chief support of the Museums, and we expect to live in the future as in the past by their bounty. Nothing can in my opinion be more shortsighted than to ignore them, to defy their wishes, and to deny to them the full enjoyment of the Museums which they can never have if they are closed all day Sunday. It would serve us exactly right if our stupid obstinacy in this matter resulted in the forfeiture of our annual public grants. The argument that we should continue to keep them closed in deference to the prejudices of certain wealthy people who, we hope, may leave us something by their wills is in my judgment contemptible. We have done that before and the very men on whose account our Trustees muzzled themselves died without leaving the

Museum a dollar. Besides, I don't think we ought to take the money of such people on any understanding or expectation that the public demand for Sunday openings shall be neglected.

"Fourth. To promote the usefulness of the Museums — there are hundreds of professional men and mechanics who cannot possibly visit the Museums on any day except Sunday.

"Fifth. As a recognition of the principle that the Museums in reality belong to, and are meant for the use of, the people.

"I think the public demand for this change is greater than some of the Trustees appreciate. We have put it off heretofore upon the plea that it should be done only in response to an actual demand from the public — and that we now have. So that meagre excuse is taken away from us. I have the good of these Museums very much at heart, and believe that they can be made vastly more useful than they have ever been, and opening them on Sunday would be a great step in the right direction."

The Trustees as a body still wavered. The Board of Apportionment in 1888 as their next move agreed to grant an additional annual appropriation of $10,000 on the condition that the Museum open either on Sundays or on two evenings weekly. Again the fight was on. But the decision reached by the Trustees was to avail themselves of the additional sum and to use the loophole of escape by opening Tuesday and Saturday evenings, as soon as the electric lights were in working order.

Meantime two museums in other cities had taken the decisive step. Both the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Cincinnati Museum had opened their doors on Sunday, and from Cincinnati came a favorable report.

In 1890 certain aggressive spirits carried the matter to the

Legislature, where a bill to compel both Museums to open on Sunday was introduced, but this was killed in the committee before it came up for final action.

The issue, however, could not be avoided much longer; the public persisted in agitating the matter; the concession granted them by opening two evenings weekly did not appease their ardor; the advocates of Sunday opening continued to urge the justice and desirability of their demand. May 18, 1891, was the decisive day when the Trustees passed a resolution, "That until the further order of the Board the Museum be opened free to the public every Sunday from one P. M. until a half hour before sunset." The vote was by no means unanimous — twelve voted for the resolution, five against, and one abstained from voting — nor was it taken without lengthy consideration. Two carefully prepared, comprehensive reports on the subject were read and laid on the table. The first, read by the Executive Committee, recommended for the Trustees' consideration and action that the Museum should abolish pay-days, open on Sundays for one year as an experiment, and in return the City should be asked to pay the total running expenses, $95,000. The second report was read by John Bigelow, by whom the Sunday opening question was viewed as a "centrifugal influence sure to provoke controversy, a result from every point of view to be deprecated," especially when the financial situation of the Museum demanded united effort "to make provision for extraordinary expenses." He therefore recommended that the subject of opening the Museum on Sunday be laid upon the table, whence it could be taken up and acted upon whenever the Trustees should find themselves in a condition to discuss it on its merits, and untrammeled by the financial exigencies which then controlled their policy. The resolution to open on Sunday which was passed later in the afternoon was voted on at this juncture and lost. The meeting

was suspended to receive two delegations interested in the issue. The New York World, through their representative, George Cary Eggleston, tendered the Museum a check for $2,500 "to help defray the expenses of opening the Museum on Sundays until the end of the present year." This offer was later declined because it was coupled with a condition — to keep the Museum open on Sundays until the end of the year — which the Trustees were by no means certain they could carry out. A Committee of Citizens had sent as their delegation ex-Judge Howland, C. C. Beaman, Rev. W. S. Rainsford, and William L. Bull. These gentlemen presented a petition signed by thirty thousand citizens, and brought news of a subscription of $4,000 already secured to help meet the increased expense of Sunday opening. Upon the withdrawal of these gentlemen, the resolution on Sunday opening was reconsidered and passed.

To carry this resolution into effect became the duty of the Executive Committee, and especially of the Director. All the employees of the Museum, including Curators and Director, were present at the Museum and actually in the galleries every Sunday to answer questions, keep order, and protect the collections. Their presence proved absolutely indispensable, for, particularly at first, the visitors had little conception either of what the Museum contained or of how the collections should be used. General Cesnola reported that they had evidently derived their idea of a museum of art "from the specimens to be seen in Dime Museums on the Bowery, and had come here fully expecting to see freaks and monstrosities similar to those found there. Many visitors took the liberty of handling every object within reach; some went to the length of marring, scratching, and breaking articles unprotected by glass; a few proved to be pickpockets." These discouraging conditions, however, were but temporary. In a very few months the character of the

visitors changed markedly; they became as a class "respectable, law-abiding, and intelligent." The laboring classes were well represented, and the attendance included more young people proportionately than on any other day of the week. As to numbers, the trial was undoubtedly successful. Between May 31st and November 15, 1891, 150,654 persons visited the Museum on Sunday afternoons, about 30% of the total attendance from January 1st to November 15th inclusive.

There was, however, another side to Sunday opening, the financial side, which is forcibly put in the Annual Report for 1891 as follows: "While Sunday opening meets with popular approval, the step remains only an experiment. It has put burdens on the finances of the Museum which they are unable to bear. It has offended some of the Museum's best friends and supporters.[1] It has alienated some who have given freely of their time and means to the institution. It has resulted in the loss of a bequest of fifty thousand dollars. It is hoped that this direct and calculable loss will be offset by a greater public interest and a more generous support, but at present the Museum finds its burdens increased and its revenue no larger than before. Eighty thousand persons petitioned for the Sunday opening, and yet the number of paying members has decreased since May 31st by 225. A very serious loss to the collections has already been sustained without the slightest compensatory benefit. What was represented by the newspapers as a universal demand that the Museum be opened on Sunday was accompanied by a popular subscription that defrayed the additional expense for only

[1] William C. Prime, than whom scarcely a man was more valuable to the Museum, resigned as Vice President and Trustee, because of his principles on Sunday observance. His comrades, after a futile attempt to persuade him to reconsider, were forced to accept his resignation, but they took this occasion to show their appreciation of his long leadership by asking him to sit for his portrait to Daniel Huntington.

about four months. The Trustees are far from wishing to take a backward step; but *unless permanent provision* can be made for the expense the Museum will have to be closed on Sunday.

"In order to settle the question and to place the finances of the Museum on a firm basis, the Trustees have proposed to the Board of Estimate and Apportionment of the City of New York that it should appropriate funds sufficient to defray the entire running expenses of the Museum, in consideration of the latter being opened free of charge to the public every day of the week and on Tuesday and Saturday evenings. There is reason to hope that if appropriate legislation can be secured at Albany, the Board of Estimate will act favorably on the above proposition when next submitted."

Such legislation was secured in May, 1892, by an act authorizing the Board of Estimate and Apportionment to appropriate a sum not to exceed $70,000, in addition to the $25,000 already authorized by law, for the maintenance of the Museum ($95,000 being the estimate of probable expense made by a Committee of the Trustees), provided it should be kept open free to the public every day in the year and two evenings in every week.[1] The Board of Estimate, contrary to this authorization, appropriated but $50,000, a sum insufficient in itself and the acceptance of which carried with it an agreement to abolish pay days, from which change a considerable loss of income must be anticipated both in dues of annual members and in admission fees.[2] Since the Board of Estimate failed to appropriate the full amount, although they did later increase the appropriation to $70,000, an appeal was made to the Legislature to amend the former act so as to permit the continuance of the

[1] For act, see Charter, Constitution, By-Laws, Lease, Laws, page 51.

[2] The Treasurer's books show no receipts from admission fees from January, 1893, through April, 1893, which would seem sufficient evidence that for four months pay days were actually abolished.

two pay days.[1] With this amendment the whole matter ended. Sunday opening had come to stay; the Sunday attendance from 1891 to the present has proved by far the largest of the week. The average number of visitors on Sunday is over 5,000.

Certainly Sunday opening may be considered as one phase of the Museum's educational work. Though no instructor teaches and no lecturer talks, the collections themselves exert a silent influence that is broadly educational to the visitors, many of whom cannot come under their spell on other days.

The more direct educational work of the Art Schools continued for several years longer. In 1887 the classes were conducted in new quarters, this time at the northeast corner of Third Avenue and Forty-ninth Street in two large rooms, 50 by 120 feet, which had been subdivided to meet the needs of the different classes. To the curriculum was added a Life Class. The plan for some years had been to remove the schools to the basement of the Museum itself just as soon as possible after the completion of the new wing. This was advocated both for economy and for convenience; the rental would be saved, and the collections would be immediately accessible to the pupils. With the Art Schools as with the Museum itself, financial problems had always been perplexing. Although to Mr. Reed's $50,000 had been added in 1887 an Endowment Fund of $30,000 by Henry G. Marquand, whose benefactions extended to so many and such varied activities of the Museum, yet it always remained a difficult matter for the Art Schools to make income meet expenditure. On October 1, 1889, the last change of location was accomplished, and the Art Schools were finally under the parental roof. But neither in light nor in healthfulness were

[1] For amendment, see Charter, Constitution, By-Laws, Lease, Laws, page 54.

the new rooms satisfactory; on the contrary, they soon proved utterly unsuitable and inadequate.

From the list of studies at this time, it would seem that the schools had gradually assumed a new character. Whereas industrial art had earlier been raised to the place of importance and the artist-artisans had been the class the schools sought to reach, now the studies taught were those included in the typical art school, such as the Art Students' League. For instance, in 1890 the curriculum embraced preparatory, antique, life, and still life classes and classes in architecture, ornamental design, illustration, and sculpture.

Upon the death in March, 1892, of Arthur L. Tuckerman, for five years Director of the Art Schools, a change in administration became necessary and a reorganization seemed desirable. The schools had ceased to have any vital relation to the Museum itself; but slight use of the collections as teaching material was made; the major part of the income was exhausted by large elementary classes in drawing and painting, for teaching which the Museum had surely no greater advantages than many a school in the city. In the gradual evolution of the schools such classes had usurped the place of more advanced classes for whose work the Museum collections would be of unquestioned value. The School Committee of the Trustees, arguing that they were under no obligations to teach elementary drawing and painting any more than the Trustees of the Astor Library were to teach reading and writing, strongly advocated dropping the elementary classes and creating classes for the study of the Museum itself, the only study for which the Trustees were responsible and for which they alone were responsible. In the words of the resolution passed May 16, 1892, the Trustees recognized that it was "their main office in the matter of education to make the Museum itself intelligible and instructive," and they approved "the organization in the

schools of the Museum of special classes for the study of special kinds of objects, and of the employment from time to time of experts in the different matters illustrated in these collections, to give public lectures upon them." This program was not carried out fully until the spring of 1894, when the elementary classes, which could not be made self-supporting, were discontinued in the interest of advanced work connected with the study of the collections themselves. The instruction in architecture had earlier been brought into line with this new policy by restricting it wholly to the systematic study of the Willard Collection of Casts.

This crisis in the Art Schools came about partly in consequence of a munificent offer of a special fund of $24,000 to provide a Traveling Scholarship for the Study of Mural Painting, to be awarded to a male student in Painting in the schools of the Museum. This gift came from Mrs. Amelia B. Lazarus and her daughter, Miss Emilie Lazarus, who wished thus to erect a memorial to Jacob H. Lazarus, who was an artist and a student of Henry Inman. The scholarship was to be known as The Jacob H. Lazarus Traveling Scholarship. The difficulty connected with the acceptance of this gift came through the fact that the classes already existing in the Museum Schools were not sufficiently advanced to provide candidates qualified to compete for such a scholarship.

The special committee appointed to consider this offer reported that it would be "practicable to establish a class of advanced students eminently worthy of such a benefaction," and such a class would draw prize pupils from many schools and furnish a sort of post-graduate course for a serious study of the Museum collections, paintings, drawings, casts, and other works. At the end of the course, which should occupy two seasons, all who so desired should become candidates for the Jacob H. Lazarus Scholarship. This should be

awarded to the man presenting the best painting upon an assigned subject. This plan was carried out; John La Farge, considered by all preëminently the man to undertake the work, was placed in charge of the class. About twenty persons were enrolled, a number of them prize-students from The National Academy of Design, The Art Students' League, and schools of art in Buffalo, Detroit, and Chicago. Throughout the world of art, this class was looked upon as "the crown and culminating point of artistic education in this country," as Professor William R. Ware, Chairman of the Committee on Schools, wrote to Mrs. Lazarus. Although in another year all classes in the Art Schools were given up, the Lazarus Scholarship remains as a permanent reminder of the decade and a half when there were Museum Art Schools. The first recipient of the scholarship was George W. Breck, who was appointed in 1896. Since the closing of the Museum School, the scholarship has been administered by a committee of artists in coöperation with the Trustees of the Museum.

Another educational factor, coöperation with Columbia University, which was effected in 1892, may possibly have been an indirect result of the Museum experiment in maintaining Art Schools. For this helpful relationship the Museum was greatly indebted to Augustus C. Merriam, Professor of Greek Archaeology, and President Seth Low. Of the latter Professor Merriam wrote in a letter to General Cesnola on October 22, 1891, "He (President Low) is very much in earnest to see some connection of mutual helpfulness brought about between the Museum and Columbia University, and it was at his request that I held the conversation with you about it." The Museum readily agreed to a plan of coöperation which may be briefly summarized as follows: Columbia should grant to students in the Museum Art Schools free admission to certain courses on art given at the

University, and should furnish speakers for a course of public lectures on art to be given at the Museum. The Museum for its part should grant to students in the University every opportunity on the two pay days for copying or sketching at the Museum, or for lectures delivered before the objects themselves, and should provide a room capable of seating five hundred persons, with lantern and slides for the public lectures.

Under this happy arrangement lectures that proved so popular as to tax the capacity of the hall were given on Saturday mornings during about three months of each year until the winter of 1900–1901. The New York public was thus enabled to hear such distinguished authorities in different branches of art as Russell Sturgis, President of the Architectural League, Dr. A. C. Merriam and Professor A. D. T. Hamlin of Columbia, Professor John C. Van Dyke of Rutgers, Rev. William Hayes Ward, the distinguished Orientalist, and Louis Fagan, for twenty-seven years Keeper of Prints in the British Museum.

Earlier than this arrangement, lectures had been given, as hitherto, for the Art School pupils, and occasionally a public lecture was held under Museum auspices. Eighteen hundred and ninety was a record year for lectures. Alexander S. Murray, Keeper of Greek and Roman Antiquities in the British Museum, visited New York in May by special invitation and delivered three notable lectures on Ancient Greek Art; Louis Fagan, of the same museum, who was in America, was engaged to deliver two lectures, one on wood-engraving, the other on etching, which "were highly appreciated by large audiences."

To one constitutional amendment of this period — the creation of the office of Honorary President for Life — reference has already been made. Other important changes were made in 1892. The officers, who had been elected hitherto

by the Annual Meeting, were now to be elected by the Trustees from the Life Members. Extensive changes in the classes of membership were made, to fit new conditions. With the increase of wealth in the hands of individuals, much larger sums of money were given or bequeathed to the Museum than had been possible forty years before. Accordingly, a new class of members, called Benefactors, was established, to which those should be eligible who had given or bequeathed $50,000; the Patrons and Fellows in Perpetuity were made one class and the sum required to enter this class was raised to $5,000 from $1,000 and $500 respectively; the Fellows for Life should now contribute $1,000.

With the Willard and Marquand Collections of casts as a nucleus, the extension of the cast collection to practically its present size was accomplished during the years 1891–1895. For this purpose, at the initiative of Robert W. de Forest, a Special Committee on Casts was appointed, with power both to raise the necessary funds and to select and purchase the casts. This committee, consisting of Henry G. Marquand, Chairman, Robert W. de Forest, Vice Chairman, Edward D. Adams, Howard Mansfield, George F. Baker, John S. Kennedy, Pierre Le Brun, Allan Marquand, Augustus C. Merriam, Francis D. Millet, Frederick W. Rhinelander, Augustus St. Gaudens, Louis C. Tiffany, John Q. A. Ward, William R. Ware, and Stanford White, took as its avowed purpose, "to obtain a complete collection of casts, historically arranged, so as to illustrate the progress and development of plastic art in all epochs, and mainly in those which have influenced our own civilization." Money was raised by subscription to the amount of nearly $60,000, and Edward Robinson, then Curator of Classical Antiquities in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, was appointed purchasing agent. "While the labors of this committee were in progress, the Museum received two bequests which were of especial bene-

fit to the collection. The first was that of George W. Cullum, who died in February, 1892, leaving it a fund [$20,000] 'with which to furnish casts of famous statuary and works of architecture, to be known as the Cullum Collection.' The second was a legacy from John Taylor Johnston, to which was added a large subscription made by him before his death in 1893, for the work of the special committee, and a further sum contributed by his children, in order to make the total thus given [$25,000] sufficient to pay for all the casts of the Italian Renaissance period ordered under the direction of the Committee, and to provide for the maintenance and growth of this branch of the collection, upon the understanding that it should be known as the John Taylor Johnston Collection.

"Another valuable contribution to the undertaking of the same committee was the gift of its treasurer, Edward D. Adams, of a complete series of reproductions, in bronze, of the bronze sculptures found in the villa at Herculaneum . . ., the originals of which are now in the Museum of Naples."[1]

It is interesting to note that of the gentlemen who were enlisted in this undertaking and who at the time had no official relation to the Museum, Mr. Robinson has since become Director and four, Messrs. Adams, Baker, Mansfield, and Millet, later became Trustees.

In many different directions the collections were growing during these years, largely by gift and bequest, since the funds of the Museum were insufficient for large purchases. Henry G. Marquand continued his benefactions to the Museum in many lines. Renaissance metalwork, porcelain, and manuscripts were included in his gifts; but most important of all was the presentation of his collection of 35 paintings, mostly Old Masters, which had been on exhibition as a loan. This valuable gift was made in a modest manner with

[1] Catalogue of the Collection of Casts, page viii.

no conditions attached, only the expressed wish that, so far as practicable, the paintings might be kept together. Among these are some of the best known and most esteemed treasures of the Museum paintings, including Van Dyck's James Stuart, a Rembrandt Portrait of a Man, and Vermeer's Young Woman at a Casement. The Museum has been glad in recent years to call one gallery The Marquand Gallery. There have been placed some of these 35 paintings with other pictures regarded as masterpieces.

Upon the death of Joseph W. Drexel, an honored Trustee and Patron, Mrs. Lucy W. Drexel, in furtherance of what she believed to have been her husband's wishes, gave to the Museum six distinct collections that during Mr. Drexel's lifetime had been lent to the Museum. These collections, covering a wide field, consisted of Egyptian antiquities, coins, ancient musical instruments, Arabic carved wood, engraved gems, and books and manuscripts. In addition to this generous disposition of her husband's possessions, Mrs. Drexel presented at the same time her own treasures of gold and silver, including watches, enamels, and miniatures.

A much larger collection of musical instruments, about 270, was received the following month, February, 1889, from Mrs. John Crosby Brown. These, chiefly from Oriental nations and savage tribes, with a few from Europe, were classified and catalogued by her son, William Adams Brown. In her letter presenting this interesting collection, Mrs. Brown asked to have access to the collection for purposes of study during her lifetime and that of her son, and to be permitted both to exchange inferior examples for those of greater worth and to add to the collection. These privileges were gladly granted and have been used ever since to the great advantage of the Museum. The collection now numbers over 3,600 examples and fills five galleries. It is

quite the equal of any European collection and in regard to installation ranks first.

A bequest by Edward C. Moore of the firm of Messrs. Tiffany & Co. of what has since been called The Edward C. Moore Collection was received in 1891 through the kindness of the family. Mr. Moore's will bequeathed all his collection to "such well established and incorporated museum or similar institution" as his executors appointed, and they chose The Metropolitan Museum. One condition was attached to the bequest, that the objects should be kept together and preserved as a separate collection. The description of this valued collection may well be given in the words of the Annual Report for that year, "Mr. Moore was a most intelligent collector and gathered round him examples of excellence and beauty from both ancient and modern art. Directed intuitively to what was of genuine worth, as well as by correct and cultivated taste in selection, he acquired from various parts of the world rare and remarkable treasures in great numbers. The collection includes antique Greek, Roman, and Etruscan vases; Tanagra groups and figurines; glass, jewelry, porcelain, metalwork, and other objects of art, together with a reference library of many hundred valuable illustrated works."

The Library collection of manuscripts and incunabula, of which the nucleus came through the gift of Mrs. Lucy Drexel, was enriched this same year by an illuminated manuscript of Saint Augustine's De Civitate Dei, in three volumes, received from Miss Mary LeRoy King.

Two valuable accessions of ceramics belong to this period: a well-selected collection of Japanese pottery and porcelain, the gift of Charles Stewart Smith, and one including both Japanese and Chinese pottery presented by Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Colman.

In 1893 the Museum came into the possession of a col-

lection, consisting of tapestries, vases, statuary, and paintings, and a fund of $20,000, received by legacy from Mrs. Elizabeth U. Coles.

In 1892 Cyrus W. Field, who had been a Patron of the Museum since 1876, showed his interest in its success and confidence in its management by presenting to the Museum his collection of objects associated with the laying of the Atlantic Cable, including medals and other testimonials in his honor, a series of paintings illustrative of the work of laying the cable, and specimens showing the process of cable construction. In this connection we might recall what has been noted in Chapter II, Mr. Field's interest in the purchase of the Cesnola Collection. General Cesnola, in a letter to Mrs. Isabelle Field Judson, wrote: "It was through your father that my collection became the property of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. It was he who introduced me to Mr. Gladstone, Earl Granville, Mr. Adams, then United States minister in London; also to the Dean of Westminster and Lady Augusta Stanley, and to many other of his English friends. He invited a large party to meet me at dinner, and also brought many to see my Cypriote Collection. I doubt if, without the great personal interest shown by your father, it would ever have become the property of The Metropolitan Museum; because it was only after this that the London press went wild over securing it for England.

"I have said, and shall always say, that it is chiefly, if not wholly, due to Cyrus W. Field that my discoveries are in this city today."

Before turning to the next period with its enlarged building and increased facilities, we might pause one moment to put on record an almost forgotten chapter of the history of New York. In 1889 the possibility of a much greater building loomed before the Trustees, a sort of mirage that lured

them on, only to vanish the following year. It happened on this wise. New York hoped, and even expected to be chosen as the location of a World's Columbian Exposition to be held in 1892, the exposition which we know as the Chicago World's Fair of 1893. To New Yorkers no other place except their own city seemed worth considering for a moment, and accordingly the mayor, Honorable Hugh J. Grant, appointed committees for all the preliminary work of an exposition, among others a Committee on Site and Buildings. This body investigated sites many, each of which had its ardent advocates and equally ardent opponents, and finally recommended "that the site be selected from the lands between ninety-seventh and one hundred and twenty-seventh streets, Fourth Avenue, and the North River, comprising Morningside and Riverside Parks and the intermediate lands, Central Park north of the large reservoir, and the lands adjacent to that part of Central Park." But their troubles were by no means past; their suggestion of using the northern part of Central Park aroused bitter opposition, as it necessitated the repealing of an act passed in 1881, which forbade the use of Central Park for any such purpose, and was contrary to the sentiment of many people.

The attention of the Committee on Site and Buildings was called to another possibility, the use of Manhattan Square and the Art Museum grounds instead of the upper part of the park. The advantages of this plan are set forth with elaborate detail in a printed letter dated October 1, 1889, and addressed to Mayor Grant. From this we quote: "Manhattan Square lies outside of the Park limits proper, and the Art Museum is so located that the plan proposed cannot injure the Park. Besides, it has been for many years the settled purpose of the City to complete the buildings now commenced there. . . .

"If the City should spend, say $5,000,000 on the two

Museum Buildings and give their use, it would be, for the purposes of the Exposition, almost equivalent to a subscription by the City of that amount of money; while to the City, it would only be anticipating an expenditure already contemplated and which will probably be made, in any event, within about ten years. . . .

"But this expenditure . . . . . would bring a large return to the City besides assisting the Exposition. The holding of a part of the Exposition in these buildings would result in many donations to the City of articles and collections, which would be sent for exhibition and allowed to remain. This was the case in Philadelphia in 1876.

"The existence of the buildings ready to receive collections would continue to be a strong incentive to persons to make further gifts and bequests.

"Another and great advantage would be that the Exposition would have from its start the valuable aid and assistance of the Officers of these Institutions. . . .

"The Art Museum and Museum of Natural History grounds could be connected by a railroad through the transverse road at 79th Street, so that visitors could be conveyed from inside one inclosure to the other by continuous passage in about two minutes, the distance being a little over half a mile. A railroad could be also built for conveying visitors by continuous passage from within the grounds of the Museum of Natural History to within the Main Exhibition grounds at 110th Street in less than five minutes, the distance being one and a half miles.

"This separation of the Exposition grounds and buildings into different parts would greatly facilitate the transportation of visitors to and from the Exposition and thus help to solve one of its most difficult problems.

"By this plan one principal entrance would be at about Seventy-ninth Street and Fifth Avenue, another at Seventy-

seventh Street and Ninth Avenue, and another at One Hundred and Tenth Street, and still another at One Hundred and Twenty-second Street."

The Committee on Site and Buildings put themselves on record as not averse to this scheme, and asked for a conference. The Trustees, acting judicially, coupled the appointment of the desired committee for consultation with a resolution, "That the Trustees of The Metropolitan Museum of Art have great interest in the proposed Exposition of 1892 in the City of New York, and desire as far as may be in their power, to aid the successful carrying out of the project consistently with their duties and the interest of this Institution." The joint committee representing the two museums and the International Exposition met several times and finally, as General Cesnola wrote in a memorandum, "died of natural death."

The Exposition itself, on the contrary, suffered a violent death, for Congress was so unreasonable as to ignore the claims of Father Knickerbocker and to listen to those of Chicago.

CHAPTER VI

CONTINUED EXTENSION

1895 — 1905

FREDERICK W. RHINELANDER
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH

CHAPTER VI

CONTINUED EXTENSION

1895 — 1905

ON November 5, 1894, came the Museum's third opening in the Park, when the new North Wing was delivered to the Trustees with fitting ceremonies. For this extension the first architect was Arthur L. Tuckerman, who was personally interested in the building through his position as Principal of the Art Schools, as well as through his earlier association with Theodore Weston, the architect of the South Wing, in preparing the plans for both the south and the north wing. His own application gives briefly his qualifications, "I myself drew the bulk of the filed plans and know the building and all its needs so thoroughly that there is scarcely a measurement I cannot recollect or a moulding or a stone. In fact, I have devoted five years to the study of the requirements of the building." Upon Mr. Tuckerman's sad death in the prime of life abroad, where he had gone in quest of health, the work was placed in the hands of Joseph Wolf. It is fitting to copy here a portion of the resolution of the Trustees when they learned of Mr. Tuckerman's death, "By his exceptional kindliness of disposition and habitual courtesy of manner (he) had won for himself the sincere regard of teachers and scholars alike. We hereby record our appreciation of his untiring devotion to all the interests of the institution committed to his charge until

obliged unwillingly to abandon his work in obedience to the peremptory orders of his Physician."

These successive openings read much alike, for such occasions naturally follow a stereotyped plan with music, prayer, and speeches. This one, according to the New York Times,[1] was unfortunate in two respects: it was a stormy day — evidently the weather man has never favored art even from the "inclement" evening of Samuel F. B. Morse's first lecture on art in 1826 to the present day; it was also the day before election, and "the interests of all active-minded people (even of the female sex)" were "largely absorbed by the election." Prayer was offered by His Grace, Archbishop Corrigan; the New Wing was delivered to the Trustees by Hon. George C. Clausen, President of the Department of Public Parks, accepted for the Trustees by Henry G. Marquand, President of the Museum, and declared open by Hon. Ashbel P. Fitch, Comptroller of the City, in the place of the Mayor.

The Trustees were especially eager to make this occasion memorable. For one thing, the invitations were designed and engraved by Edwin Davis French, whose excellent work is represented also in the Museum Library book-plates. For another, a banquet at The Waldorf formed a pleasant close to the day. On this occasion fifty-five guests sat down at the table. Hon. Joseph H. Choate presided, introducing the following speakers: Henry G. Marquand, Bishop Henry C. Potter, Archbishop Corrigan, Hon. Seth Low, Professor William M. Sloane of Princeton University, Dr. William C. Prime, Professor John F. Weir, General Cesnola, Charles Dudley Warner, Parke Godwin, General Horace Porter, and Hon. Chauncey M. Depew.[2]

Now that the Trustees had increased space at their disposal, they resumed their policy of holding loan exhibitions by plan-

[1] N. Y. Times, Nov. 6, 1894.

[2] These names are taken from the N. Y. Herald of Nov. 5, 1894.

ning at once for such an exhibition of paintings and miniatures "illustrative of early American art" and "representing men and women of distinction in the early social, military, naval, and political history of our country, embracing the time immediately preceding the Declaration of Independence, and for fifty years thereafter." This exhibition, declared to be "beyond comparison the most comprehensive and representative collection of its kind ever brought together," was opened in the fall of 1895. The catalogue, which contained entries of

NORTH WING OF THE MUSEUM

140 oil paintings and 21 miniatures, continued in demand both here and abroad after the exhibition closed.

A second loan exhibition of paintings was held from May 28 to October 15, 1900. This, a memorial exhibition of the works of Frederic E. Church, N. A., a member of the Museum's original Board of Trustees, was held at the earnest wish of several friends of the artist. The catalogue, more elaborate in form than the usual Museum publication, contained an introduction written by Charles Dudley Warner, a portrait of the artist, and fourteen full-page half-tone illustrations of his paintings.

The work of both of these exhibitions devolved largely

upon George H. Story, who became Curator of Paintings in 1889 and continued in that position until 1906, when he asked to be relieved from his duties, and was honored with the position of Curator Emeritus, which he continues to hold.

Two other uses for the increased space now available were as a bicycle-room, where cyclists during their visits might find safe storage for their wheels, and a moulding department, where casts of the statuary might be made. The need for a moulding atelier had been felt for several years, both for convenience and as a source of income. In 1893 a special committee appointed to consider the question reported in favor of establishing such a department as soon as space could be secured for its installation. A few moulds were obtained and work commenced on a small scale, awaiting the opportunity to establish a permanent atelier adequate to the demands made upon the Museum by colleges, art schools, libraries, and other museums. Although this department was never fully established and no longer exists, several orders were satisfactorily filled. Casts of the forty slabs of the Parthenon frieze and of the Venus of Melos were made during 1898; during the following year a cast of the altarpiece by Luca della Robbia, which was the gift of Mr. Marquand, and one of George Grey Barnard's Two Natures were sent to Archbishop Corrigan and the Chicago Art Institute respectively.

The next decade might well be termed an era of prosperity. There were no great crises to face, no great problems to solve. There was, indeed, the constant strain occasioned by an income insufficient to allow of wise purchases, but the course of events was singularly quiet and undisturbed. That the confidence of the community was with the Museum was evinced by the frequency with which gifts great and small were committed to the care of the Trustees. Some they must thankfully decline, for example,

"a collection representing monkeys in various materials," but many they might with equal thankfulness accept. Illustrative of some of the absurd offers that reached the Museum in those days is one spoken of in the following paragraph from the New York Herald of March 3, 1897. "A New York woman wrote to the director of The Metropolitan Museum of Art the other day saying that she owned a treasure which she would like to sell at once, for she was hard up. This treasure, she said, was a painting of Saint Michael slaying the dragon. It was very old, but fairly well preserved. Her great grandfather had dug it out of the ruins of Herculaneum. The director replied, saying that if the facts were as set forth the lady had a treasure of priceless value. It was worth millions, if it was worth a cent. 'Herculaneum,' said he, 'has been lying under the lava of Vesuvius for 2,000 years. That the canvas should have escaped destruction when the mountain poured forth its fiery contents on the towns at its base is indeed remarkable. That it has further resisted the disintegrating hand of time is no less remarkable. That the artist should have shown a spirit of prophecy and delineated an incident of the Christian religion long before it happened is more than remarkable. It is miraculous. You should keep the Saint Michael.' In answer to this the woman wrote again, saying: 'If the picture is really so valuable, I don't see why you won't take it at $500.'"

To record worthily all the gifts and bequests of note becomes increasingly difficult. It is desirable, however, to give brief space to a few prominent additions. For example, the bulk of the present exhibition of arms and armor was acquired by the gift of the Ellis Collection and the purchase of the Dino Collection. The former, consisting of 166 pieces and two tapestries, brought together by John S. Ellis, of Ellislea, Westchester, was received after his death

in 1896 through the generosity of Mrs. Ellis and her son, A. Van Horne Ellis, and in the name of John S. Ellis. The latter collection, which "may safely be regarded as the most valuable gathering of arms and armor in America," was purchased in 1904 from the owner, Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, Duc de Dino, a well-known connoisseur on arms and armor, through the advice and initiative of Rutherfurd Stuyvesant, one of the Founders of the Museum, as well as one of the earliest collectors of armor in the country.

The name of George A. Hearn begins to appear frequently on the pages of the Annual Reports through virtue of his gifts and loans to the Department of Paintings. J. Pierpont Morgan, also, has begun his princely giving to the Museum, of which he was at this time a Trustee. In 1900 he offered as a gift a collection of classical Greek objects in gold and three paintings. Samuel P. Avery continued his benefactions along many lines and Mrs. S. P. Avery in 1897 presented to the Museum 289 old silver spoons collected during the years 1867-1890.

By bequest from Joseph H. Durkee came an interesting collection of about 8,000 ancient coins, Roman, Arabic, East Indian, and Chinese, in gold, silver, copper, and other materials. Other bequests of note were those of R. G. Dun, Osgood Field, and Henry Villard. The first, made in 1900, gave to the Museum all or any part of Mr. Dun's collection of pictures that the Trustees might select. By this bequest there reverted to the Museum upon the death of Mrs. Dun in 1911 five pictures of importance belonging to the modern French school. The second, that of Osgood Field, gave to the Museum a varied list of works of art, which he termed bric-à-brac. As some of these were not suitable for the Museum, the bequest was declined. Thereupon Mr. Field's nephew, William B. Osgood Field, generously offered to present to the Museum, in his uncle's name, such part of the

collection as the Trustees could accept. Upon these terms the Trustees gladly received the bequest, which contained a number of Italian majolica vases of great value, as well as a collection of the faience of Asia Minor and Persia. The bequest of Henry Villard was $5,000 in money, a gift over which no question of acceptance ever arises.

One of the earlier bequests to the Museum was $5,000 given by William Earl Dodge in 1883 and employed as a fund for purchasing works of art. Fifteen years later William E. Dodge, the son, who served as a Trustee continuously for over a quarter of a century, and was its first vice-president at the time of his death in 1903, contributed $20,000 as a supplement to this gift, on the understanding that the entire income should be used to buy objects of art.

A pleasurable unexpectedness characterized the largest bequest the Museum ever received. In 1883 Jacob S. Rogers became an Annual Member, and continued such until his death in 1901. Each year he paid his $10, usually in person, and one year he received upon request a copy of the Museum charter, constitution, lease, and by-laws. When after Mr. Rogers' death in 1901 his will was made public, it appeared that the Museum had been made the residuary legatee of an estate estimated from $5,500,000 to $7,000,000,on the following terms: "The income only of the fund hereby created, or intended so to be, to be used for the purchase of rare and desirable art objects, and in the purchase of books for the Library of said Museum, and for such purposes exclusively; the principal of said fund is not to be used, diminished, or impaired for any purpose whatever." The Trustees were surprised and almost overwhelmed to have at last what for a long time they had been asking for, a large fund for the purchase of objects of art. Such a bequest spelled opportunity. It was like an emancipation proclamation, striking off the shackles of a strict economy which had hampered

every movement up to this time. In the words of William E. Dodge, "The wonderful will of Jacob Rogers with its splendid possibilities for the Museum has astonished us all greatly. It seems like a golden dream." J. Edwards Clarke of the National Bureau of Education in his congratulations to General Cesnola voiced the feeling of many friends of the institution, "It is an event on which the whole United States are to be congratulated; for it gives pecuniary independence to the chief art power of the country. What the Trustees and officers of the Museum have already accomplished is like a fairy tale in its splendor. The opportunities that now open before them are simply bewildering."

Such great resources were not contemplated when the Constitution of 1870 was adopted nor was provision made for them in the successive amendments to that constitution. The elective committees did not include a Finance Committee. In lieu of this the Executive Committee had appointed from its membership a sub-committee to perform the duties naturally devolving upon a Finance Committee. In 1902 there was added to the committees annually elected by the Trustees from their own number, a Finance Committee to have charge of the real estate, moneys, and securities of the endowment and all other permanent funds of the Museum, with authority to invest and re-invest them. They were to deposit the securities in a Trust Company or Safe Deposit Company approved by the Executive Committee, receive the income, pay the same to the Treasurer, and report annually to the Trustees. Thus the machinery was made ready for the custody and use of a large fund.

Fortunately there existed no legal barrier to the acceptance of a bequest that carried with it the holding and sale of real estate. A few years before, when the fact was brought to the attention of the Trustees that the charter might not give them such rights, they had secured the passage of an act amend-

ing the charter in this particular. This act, passed March 4, 1898, enabled the corporation to "take and hold by gift, devise, bequest, purchase, or lease, either absolutely or in trust, for any purpose comprised in the objects of the corporation, any real or personal property necessary or proper for the purposes of its incorporation."

Two of the most interesting accessions bought during 1903 with the income of the Rogers Fund are the Boscoreale frescoes, taken from a villa in Boscoreale, a village on the southern slope of Vesuvius that shared the fate of Pompeii, and the Etruscan bronze biga of the sixth century B. C., which was discovered in fragments in a tomb on a hillside near Monteleone di Spoleto, in Umbria.

On April 21, 1902, Heber R. Bishop entered into an agreement with the Museum, of which he was a Trustee, to transfer to its possession and keeping his extensive collection of jade, which was displayed in the ball room of his residence, and to give $55,000 in bonds for the construction of a room for the exhibition of this collection. This room should be in substance a replica of the interior of his ball room. The understanding was that the collection should be displayed as a unit, and no other objects except those added by the family be placed in the room. To Carrère and Hastings was intrusted the work of carrying out Mr. Bishop's plans in one of the rooms of the new East Wing. This was, then, the first instance in this Museum of a donor's planning and constructing the room which should house his treasure.

Upon Mr. Bishop's death, December 10, 1902, his will was found to contain a codicil, providing for payment of such additional sums as might be necessary for the construction and equipment of the Bishop Room. In it he also directed his executors to continue the preparation of the catalogue of his collection, a work on which he had been engaged for many years, and to present the edition to the principal museums

and libraries of all nations. "During Mr. Bishop's last trip to Japan and China in 1892, while in the latter country he met that great admirer of Japan, Sir Edwin Arnold, and it was at his suggestion that . . . George Frederick Kunz, Ph. D., was invited to take charge of the scientific part of the book. Upon Mr. Bishop's arrival in New York, a conference was held and an outline of the work planned, covering a most thorough investigation of the subject of jade. . . . Neither care nor expense was spared in carrying on the work; some thirty scientists and specialists, both in Europe and America, were engaged to contribute their views upon aspects of the subject; the illustrations were prepared in the best possible manner, Chinese and Japanese artists being employed to execute many of them, and color experts were freely consulted under the supervision of Mr. Bishop. The plan of the whole work, in its every detail, was carefully thought out by him, from its inception in 1886 when he purchased his first piece of jade . . . until the final distribution of the volumes."[1]

The year 1902 also marked the loan by George W. Vanderbilt of the valuable collection of 135 modern paintings made by his father, William H. Vanderbilt, a collection by European artists, generally of the last half of the nineteenth century, which contains works by Corot, Troyon, Diaz, Rousseau, Dupré, and Millet, including Millet's Sower and Water Carrier. This generous loan was offered through Samuel P. Avery, who had helped Mr. Vanderbilt in securing so rich a collection and in turn helped the Museum to secure it as a loan.

From 1893 until 1901, the annual maintenance appropriation which the city was authorized to make stood at $95,000. Then by an act of the legislature it was raised on

[1] Occasional Notes, No. II. Supplement to the Bulletin, May, MCMVI, p. 2.

EAST WING OF THE MUSEUM
AS PLANNED

EAST WING OF THE MUSEUM
AS COMPLETED

March 7th to $150,000, at which figure it stood until April 27, 1906, when by another act it was increased to $200,000, the amount received for maintenance at the present time.

These successive additions to the appropriation have been occasioned by the increased needs of an enlarged and repeatedly enlarging plant. Before 1905, which has seemed a reasonable date with which to close this chapter, because it marks a clearly-defined change in administration, the third wing, known as the East Wing, had been constructed and occupied. The proper action to secure an appropriation of $1,000,000 for building this wing was taken in 1895, the act becoming a law on April 18th.[1] To Richard Morris Hunt, an efficient Trustee of the Museum from its incorporation, was intrusted not merely the plan for this new extension but the work of laying out the general scheme that all future additions should follow until the entire area set aside for the use of the Museum by the enabling act of April 5, 1871, should be covered and the original brick building be completely surrounded with connecting buildings. Mr. Hunt's lamented death occasioned the need for the appointment of a new architect. The choice rested upon Richard Howland Hunt, the son, who had often talked over the problems of construction with his father and so could give a continuity to the work that no other architect could have given. George B. Post accepted the place of consulting architect. The building, which had first faced west and later south, now looked toward the east, as the principal entrance was constructed in the new wing. This portion of the building was not of brick like the earlier parts, but of Indiana limestone. The façade was enriched by medallions and caryatids designed by and executed under the supervision of Karl Bitter. The medallions bear the heads of certain Old Masters selected by the Building Committee: Bramante, Dürer,

[1] See Charter, Constitution, By-Laws, Lease, Laws, p. 55.

Michelangelo, Raphael, Velazquez, and Rembrandt, while the caryatids represent Sculpture, Architecture, Painting, and Music.

Editorial comment on this addition was almost universally favorable. The following words from the New York Evening Post of December 23, 1902, may stand as contemporaneous opinion, "The most noteworthy building of its kind in the

MAIN ENTRANCE HALL
EAST WING OF THE MUSEUM

city, one of the finest in the world, and the only public building of recent years which approaches in dignity and grandeur the museums of the old world."

The ceremony of opening this, the most beautiful part of the Museum building, on December 22, 1902, was extremely simple. It was formally opened with prayer by the Right Reverend Bishop of Washington, Henry Y. Satterlee; presentation of the building to the Trustees by Hon. William R. Willcox, President of the Department of Parks; the accep-

tance of it by Frederick W. Rhinelander, who upon the death of Henry G. Marquand had become President of the Museum; and an address by Hon. Seth Low, Mayor of the City.

After Richard Morris Hunt's death the Municipal Art Society, of which he was the first president, initiated a movement to erect some suitable memorial to him. In this act of appreciation the Museum had its due share with the Century Association, the American Institute of Architects, the Architectural League, the National Sculpture Society, and other organizations to which Mr. Hunt belonged. Daniel Chester French was chosen as sculptor. The place selected for this memorial was on the west of Fifth Avenue opposite the Lenox Library, one of the architect's most distinguished works, now in process of demolition. Here the memorial was dedicated October 31, 1898, on the anniversary of Mr. Hunt's birth

During the six years from 1899 to 1904, the Museum lost by death nine of its Trustees, loyal men upon whom the Museum had depended, whose guidance in some instances went back even to the foundation of the institution, and whose services ever since had been arduous and unremitting. The first of these was Cornelius Vanderbilt, who, though at the head of a vast railroad system, found time for twenty years to be an active member of the Board of Trustees and for twelve years Chairman of the Executive Committee. His constant, unwearying interest is shown by the fact that during all that time he never missed a meeting when he was in New York.

The following year James A. Garland, a prominent banker, and Hiram Hitchcock, the last of the original members of the firm that opened the Fifth Avenue Hotel, dropped from the ranks. Mr. Garland was a patron of art and a connoisseur of excellent judgment, who for many years devoted himself

to gathering a large and valuable collection of ancient Chinese porcelain. This he had placed on exhibition at the Museum as a loan six years previous to his death.

After Mr. Garland's death his executors sold to Duveen Brothers the Garland Collection, a possession which had given the Museum distinction among all art museums. The newspapers gave expression to the prevailing dismay at the loss to America of so great a treasure. Soon, however, J. Pierpont Morgan prevented such a misfortune by purchasing the collection and continuing to lend it to the Museum. The Garland Collection has since then been known as the Morgan Collection, and to it from time to time have been added many rare pieces of Chinese porcelain.

Mr. Hitchcock's term of service as a Museum Trustee went back to 1885, and his unofficial interest much further, for as an archaeologist and a close friend of General Cesnola's, he had helped in effecting the purchase of the Cypriote antiquities by the Museum. For many years he had acted as Treasurer, a conscientious and prudent manager of its funds. "Though a man of remarkable decision and firmness of character, he yet possessed such a genial and gentle personality, so much courtesy, modesty, and charity, that he won the warm affection of all his associates, who esteemed him highly for his manly, gracious, and amiable traits, the spirit of a true Christian gentleman." Thus did the Trustees refer to Mr. Hitchcock.

In 1902 the Museum suffered an even greater loss when three prominent members joined the great majority. Among these was Henry G. Marquand, the banker and art collector, New York's most distinguished patron of art, who had conferred honor on the Museum by becoming its second President in 1889. Perhaps no man in all the list of noble friends of the Museum was more enthusiastically devoted to its interests; for over thirty years it had been his chief thought

and great joy. A natural-born connoisseur, he knew true art instinctively and it was his delight to collect many rare treasures.

Salem H. Wales, for some years managing editor of the Scientific American, another colleague who died in 1902, was made a Trustee in 1872, and had been actively connected with the Museum since that time, a period of thirty years, during which every duty devolving on him was performed faithfully and zealously. Part of this time he had been Park Commissioner and President of the Department of Parks, positions which gave him an opportunity to work for the Museum interests. At the time of his death he was in the responsible position of Chairman of the Building Committee.

Heber R. Bishop, another banker and director in many railroad companies, the third Trustee to die in 1902, had been a valued member of the Board of Trustees for nearly twenty years. He built his own monument in the large collection of jades which, as elsewhere stated, was presented to the Museum a few months previous to his death.

The following year, 1903, the Trustees were called on to mourn the loss of one of their stanchest friends and most devoted associates, William E. Dodge, a merchant of extensive business interests, who also "took a deep interest in all the prominent movements of his time, and especially in those of a religious, philanthropic, and educational character, giving liberally both of his time and means to every object that had in view the elevation of his fellow-men." For more than a quarter of a century he had served continuously as Trustee and filled the responsible position of Chairman of the Executive Committee for several years before his death.

Nineteen hundred and four continued the Museum's record of loss, for the devoted Director and two of the original Trustees, one of whom was the President succeeding Mr. Marquand, died during that year. The old order was in-

deed changing, yielding place to new. It is difficult to speak with sufficient appreciation of the services of such men as Samuel P. Avery, Frederick W. Rhinelander, and General Louis Palma di Cesnola.

Mr. Avery's connection with the Museum continued uninterruptedly from its very inception, when he was a member of the Art Committee of the Union League Club and a secretary of the memorable meeting of November 23, 1869. "He brought to the service of the Museum a large experience in the world of art, a mind enriched by travel and trained by the observation and study of the world's famous collections." A discriminating collector and a generous giver, he enriched by his abundant liberality the educational and art institutions of New York City, for example, the New York Public Library and Columbia University. Above all, his colleagues, the Trustees, bear witness that "he was a man of the highest ideals, who placed character above all other attainments."

Frederick W. Rhinelander, the third President of the Museum, had also known the Museum from its infancy. He was one of the signers of the original charter granted by the Legislature, one of the original subscribers, and continuously a Trustee. All his powers were enlisted in the service of the Museum, which became his chief pleasure and duty. He not only acquainted himself thoroughly with its collections and its needs, but also became familiar with foreign museums, that he might be better fitted to further the interests of his own museum.

Of General Cesnola the Trustees wrote:

"His fidelity, his minute attention to his duties, and his capacity for work during his long career of service, merit great praise. Other distinctions and other interests in life, if not forgotten, were permanently laid aside, and the welfare and growth of the Museum became his single interest and absorbing occupation. His military training, when joined to his

public experience, gave him distinguished powers of administration; and, while critics are never wanting, his capacity to administer the Museum and adequately to exhibit its contents has not been questioned.

"Whoever shall become his successor, and with whatever gifts he shall be endowed, the martial, independent figure of General di Cesnola — somewhat restive in opposition and somewhat impetuous in speech and action, but at all times devoted to his duty and winning the affection of his subordinates and associates — will long remain a kindly and grateful memory."

The death of General Cesnola meant much more than we at this distance can easily conceive. The Museum without his commanding personality must have seemed to his comrades almost unthinkable. He had known and often personally supervised each minute detail in every department. It was then a one man museum to a large extent; the stamp of Gen. Cesnola's character was impressed upon the institution. But it was growing beyond the possibility of one man's detailed oversight, even a man of Gen. Cesnola's capacity for steady work, and this fact he fully recognized; had he lived longer, the Museum must have changed its organization. An editorial in the New York Evening Post at the time of the opening of the East Wing put the matter fairly and frankly, and so we quote it in conclusion.

"The very spaciousness and dignity of the architectural setting recall strikingly the fact that the curatorial staff neither in number nor in expert knowledge would be considered adequate in a provincial museum of Germany, France, or Italy. That accomplished executive, General di Cesnola, has on various occasions expressed his desire to add experts of established reputation to the present staff. The needs of the collections as they now are demand this imperatively. Even more will the proper expenditure of the Rogers endow-

ment, of which the Museum will soon have complete possession, require the highest kind of connoisseurship and knowledge of the art market. Without offense, it may be said that the Museum, in a period of remarkable accumulation, has fallen behind in the matter of scientific handling of its own exhibits. It should be said, too, that the time has passed when the individual zeal of such an enthusiast as Mr. Henry Marquand could control so great an institution. Private in form, this corporation has had notable subsidies from the State and City governments, and has always handsomely recognized its public duties and functions. High among these duties at the present time is that of granting Director di Cesnola's request for a supplementary staff of expert curators. Only in this way can the friends of art be sure that the splendid new wing will not only be filled, but filled worthily."[1]

[1]N. Y. Evening Post, Dec. 23, 1902.

CHAPTER VII

THE PRESIDENCY OF J. PIERPONT MORGAN

1905 — 1912

J. PIERPONT MORGAN

FROM THE PORTRAIT BY CARLOS BACA-FLOR

CHAPTER VII

THE PRESIDENCY OF J. PIERPONT MORGAN

1905 — 1912

THE first step that marked a new period of the Museum's activity was the election on November 21, 1904, as fourth president of J. Pierpont Morgan, who became a patron in 1871, a trustee in 1889, and had been a generous donor of objects of art since 1897. Mr. Morgan brought to the service of the Museum an earnest zeal for its welfare and an intimate acquaintance with the world of art in all its branches, coupled with every quality of leadership. His intuitive perception, his quick and decisive action, joined to his broad knowledge of men and affairs and his powerful influence, have combined to make that leadership singularly effective.

Robert W. de Forest, who had been a trustee since 1889 and a member of various important committees, became at almost the same time Secretary of the Board of Trustees. Mr. de Forest's deep interest in the Museum is both personal and hereditary, inasmuch as John Taylor Johnston was his father-in-law. With wide sympathy and knowledge of men, art, and social conditions, with prompt and sure initiative in large affairs, with rare skill in their organization — recognizing essentials, yet not forgetful of attendant details — and with a strong and generous guiding hand, Mr. de Forest as Secretary and, later, as Second Vice President,

has given of his time and energy unstintingly to the work of the Trustees in building up the Museum and administering its affairs.

The vacant directorship was temporarily filled by George H. Story, Curator of Painting, who was assigned to act in that capacity until a new Director could be selected.

Before General Cesnola's death a committee had been appointed to revise the constitution in a thoroughgoing fashion. In 1905 the changes recommended by this committee were made. Generally speaking, they were alterations in wording suggested for greater exactness or brevity of definition. Among the important changes in practice were the provisions that the President, Vice Presidents, and Treasurer should be elected from among the Trustees instead of from the Life Members of the Corporation; that Trustees should meet regularly five times annually, instead of four; that any person might be elected a Benefactor, Fellow in Perpetuity, or Fellow for Life who had given books, works of art, or objects for the collections to the value of the amount requisite for his admission to that degree, not twice the amount, as hitherto; that the term Patron should be dropped and Fellow in Perpetuity retained for that rank of membership; and finally, that an amendment to the Constitution should be possible by recommendation of a majority of the Trustees, instead of two-thirds, and by-laws, rules, and regulations might be made by the majority of the Trustees present at any meeting.

An early recommendation of the new secretary was that different classes of contributing membership should be created to afford an opportunity to those who would gladly give to the Museum much more than the ten dollars of the annual member and yet could not easily reach the thousand dollars of the Fellow for Life; in other words, the Museum should employ business methods to utilize all available public sup-

SIR CASPAR PURDON CLARKE
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH

port. Accordingly, two new classes of membership were created: Sustaining Members, who pay an annual contribution of $25 and less than $100; and Fellowship Members, who pay an annual contribution of $100 or more. By this change the receipts from membership increased from $22,790 in 1904 to $28,305 in 1905, and $37,355 in 1906, in connection with systematic efforts to enlarge the membership.

The Trustees felt that the crucial issue for the Museum at this juncture was the selection of the right man as Director. Given the right Director, the Museum had a greater opportunity to gain popular favor and ally itself with all classes of people than ever before, on the general principle that success if rightly utilized brings success. In this connection the qualifications of the ideal person for the position were defined by the Trustees as follows:

"The ideal director should combine

"(a) Executive ability.

"(b) Courtesy, and those qualities of the gentleman and man of the world which will enable him to put the Museum in a relation of respect and sympathy with the different classes of the community he meets in its interest.

"(c) Expert knowledge of art, if not in all departments, at least with such breadth of view as to make him sympathize with all departments.

"(d) Museum experience. . . . Executive capacity and gentlemanly qualities are essential. Museum experience can be acquired and comparatively limited knowledge of art on the part of the director can be supplemented by such knowledge in the curators of different departments under him."

These four requisites were combined to an unusual degree in Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke, who resigned the Art Directorship of the Victoria and Albert Museum to assume the duties of Director of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, to which he was elected on January 21, 1905. His marked

executive ability was attested by his long and successful career in various branches of the government service. His museum experience in Europe and the Far East was of about thirty-five years' duration, a period of manifold duties well performed, and crowned by his appointment as director of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, familiarly known as the South Kensington Museum. His expert knowledge of art was evidenced by his training at the National Art Training Schools, by the important commissions with which he had been intrusted both as an architect and as a museum purchasing agent, and by his recognized place as an author and lecturer on subjects connected with art and archaeology. More than all else, his personality was so genial, his sympathy and kindliness of disposition so unfailing, his interest in others so infectious that he was unusually equipped to win friends for the Museum and extend a gracious hospitality to all classes of people. In October, 1905, Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke took up his duties, and the following month, on November 15th, was tendered a reception at the Museum when more than 8,000 people from all classes of New York society welcomed the new director.

Another appointment was made in December, 1905, when Edward Robinson, formerly Director of the Museum of Fine Arts of Boston, Mass., was elected Assistant Director, a newly created position of which he was the first incumbent. From the report of the committee, the following statement in regard to Mr. Robinson is copied:

"This recommendation is made after full conference with our Director, with his entire concurrence and, indeed, at his desire.

"Mr. Robinson is personally known to most of our Trustees and is widely known in Museum and academic circles both at home and abroad. He was graduated from Harvard University in 1879, studied for five years abroad, in Germany,

Greece, and elsewhere, was Curator of Classical Antiques in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts from 1885 to 1902, and has been Director of that Museum until his resignation was accepted on December 9. He was also lecturer on Classical Archaeology at Harvard University for many years. He is a member of many art and archaeological societies. He received the degree of LL.D. from Aberdeen University, Scotland, in April last. He tendered his resignation as Director of the Boston Museum some four months ago, for reasons satisfactory to himself and his friends, and which do not affect in any degree his qualifications for official position in our Museum."

The work of organization of an enlarged staff continued as opportunity afforded to obtain men and women of the right calibre. The aim throughout was to add to the staff trained experts, each of whom should be assigned to a particular department according to his special training. Quoting again from the Secretary's statement of policy, "They (the curators) should each be an expert in his particular department, capable not only of arranging and scientifically cataloguing the collections under them, but of acting as expert advisers in purchasing. They should also, as far as possible, have executive ability, courtesy, and relations to other scientific men, but their prime requisite should be knowledge of their particular departments. Sooner or later the Museum, as respects departments, should be systematically reorganized, and a competent curator placed at the head of each separate department."

The keynote of the present era in the history of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, as in that of museums generally, is educational efficiency. As has been said, "It has become well recognized in recent years that the undertaking of a museum does not cease with the collection and exhibition of works of art. It has to make them intelligible and attrac-

tive to the public." With this trend President, Secretary, and Director of The Metropolitan Museum were in heartiest accord and for the realization of this aim steps were almost immediately taken.

Under the general head of educational work may be grouped the rearrangement of the collections in a more logical and instructive way, the holding of frequent temporary loan exhibitions, the publication of the Museum Bulletin, the opening of a room for recent accessions, the issuing of catalogues, the sale of photographs, the increased facilities offered to students of art, copyists, and artists, to sketch from or copy objects in the Museum collection, the better accommodation and greater use of the Library, and most important perhaps, the relation of coöperation with the public and private schools of greater New York.

The rearrangement of the objects for greater educational value has been progressing steadily. At last the Museum found itself in a position to build up its collections according to a comprehensive scientific plan. Earlier the officers could afford neither to alienate the friends of the Museum by declining gifts that were sometimes scarcely worthy to be exhibited, nor to purchase objects of real excellence to fill in the gaps in the collection. The aim in the increase and rearrangement of the collections was stated by the Trustees to be "not merely to assemble beautiful objects and display them harmoniously, still less to amass a collection of unrelated curios, but to group together the masterpieces of different countries and times in such relation and sequence as to illustrate the history of art in the broadest sense, to make plain its teaching, and to inspire and direct its national development." They pledged themselves not to "forget that the original purpose of the Museum, as set forth in its charter, was largely educational and was not merely that of 'establishing' a great collection of art

objects, but 'of encouraging and developing the study of the fine arts and the application of arts to manufactures and practical life and of advancing the general knowledge of kindred subjects.'" It would be impracticable at least, if not impossible, to record the entire development of the Museum in carrying out this aim. The new Egyptian galleries may stand as a striking illustration of the accomplishment of only a few years. "Less than five years ago that entire collection was contained in the corridor at the right of the main staircase. It included objects, many of them important, which had been acquired principally through chance, by gifts and otherwise, and which were largely unrelated to one another, representing but a few periods in the long course of Egyptian civilization. Today it fills more than comfortably ten galleries, arranged in historical sequence, so that the visitor who passes from one to another, following the order in which they are numbered, can trace the whole history of Egyptian art from its crude beginnings in predynastic times to its last expressions in the Coptic period. In other words, he will cover a span of some 4,500 years, from about 4000 B. C. to the seventh century A. D., and this almost exclusively with original material, the few reproductions which are included having been added mainly for purposes of illustration."[1]

The policy of holding frequent loan exhibitions, which may justly be considered a return to the plan of the first Trustees, has been definitely adopted in recent years and carried out as a recognized part of the Museum program since 1908. "It is the intention of the Trustees," according to an announcement made through the Bulletin, "to confine each of these exhibitions to one subject, in a comparatively narrow field, but to have them ultimately cover the entire range of art which is represented in the collections of the Museum,

[1] Bulletin, Vol. VI, p. 203.

strengthening these for the time by examples borrowed from other collections, chiefly those of private owners, which are not usually accessible to the public." They "look forward to a great increase in the educational work which the Museum will be enabled to perform . . . both by stimulating a general interest in the various forms of art, or the works of individual artists, which will thus be displayed, and by offering to the public an exceptionally high standard for the cultivation of its taste or knowledge of the arts that will be included."[1] The special fields of art already touched by these short exhibitions include paintings, Dutch and American, sculpture, arms and armor, rugs, silver, glass, ceramics, and furniture. Their educational value has been enhanced by the careful preparation of catalogues, text-books as it were, for each exhibition, both text and illustrations furnishing a permanent record of a temporary exhibit. The generous co-operation in these exhibitions of hundreds of lenders furnishes a pleasing illustration of the way in which American collectors interpret the privileges of possession.

Although the story of these recent exhibitions is familiar to the friends of the Museum, a brief summary should be inserted here for the sake of record. The first, a memorial exhibition of the works of the late Augustus Saint-Gaudens, was arranged with the active assistance of Mrs. Saint-Gaudens and Homer Saint-Gaudens, and through the enthusiastic labors of a distinguished committee, of which Daniel Chester French was Chairman and Frederick S. Wait, Treasurer. This exhibition was held in the large central hall of the Fifth Avenue Wing from March 2, 1908, to May 31, 1908. Its one hundred and fifty-four objects included practically all of the achievements of "our foremost sculptor." Where the originals could not be secured because of their character, plaster casts or photographs represented the work of the master.

[1] Bulletin, Vol. V, p. 168.

The year 1909 was memorable for its loan exhibitions. Fortunate circumstances combined with skilful planning and forceful administration account for the unusual success of the year. From January 4th to February 22d, in the galleries of the new north wing, then first used, was held a unique exhibition of German paintings and sculpture on the initiative of a public-spirited citizen of New York, Hugo Reisinger. The Consul General of the German Empire, Mr. Buenz, with the special sanction of the German Emperor, asked for space in our galleries for an exhibition that should represent the best contemporary German art, the expense to be borne by the friends of that art who desired to secure for it wider recognition and greater appreciation. Over two hundred works, selected by competent German authorities, were exhibited.

On September 20th of the same year, a loan exhibition was held in connection with the Hudson-Fulton Celebration. It was assembled under the direction of the Sub-committee on Art Exhibits of the Hudson-Fulton Commission, of which Robert W. deForest was Chairman, and Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke, Edward Robinson, George A. Hearn, and George F. Kunz were members. J. Pierpont Morgan was Chairman of the general committee of which this was a subcommittee. The work of collection and arrangement fell upon the staff of the Museum. The exhibit was divided into two distinct parts — a section of Dutch paintings, numbering 143 works, including 37 pictures by Rembrandt, 21 by Frans Hals, and 6 by Vermeer, and an American section devoted to early paintings and industrial arts. These two sections represented as nearly as possible the period of Hudson and the period of Fulton. Both sections constituted the most notable loan collections within their respective spheres ever brought together in America. The appreciation which this exhibition won from the public was

evident from the record of attendance, which included over 300,000 visitors. An illustrated catalogue de luxe of the Dutch paintings was subsequently published and affords a permanent record of this memorable collection.

In the first exhibition of 1910, the Whistler Exhibition, held from March 15th to May 31st, the aim was not merely to gather an excellent showing of the works of this original artist, an aim which was accomplished, as the collection included forty-six pictures in oil and pastel, but also to exhibit these works in Whistler's own way, following in every minute detail of arrangement and setting the noteworthy example furnished by the artist himself. This attempt gained the approval of Whistler's executrix, Miss Rosalind Birnie-Philip.

Rare early Oriental rugs were collected for the next exhibit, held from November 1, 1910, to January 15, 1911, which attracted wide interest.

The record of 1911 includes four exhibitions, the largest number in any one year. Simultaneously from February 6th to March 19th were held a memorial exhibition of the works of the late Winslow Homer and an exhibition of European arms and armor, the first of its kind in America. The latter was continued for ten weeks, until April 16th. Simultaneously again and in the same exhibition hall were exhibited from November 6th to December 31st, a group of American colonial portraits by Smibert, Copley, Blackburn, and others, and a collection of early ecclesiastical silver used in New York, New Jersey, and the South, of English, Swedish, Dutch, and American workmanship, and of domestic plate made by early New York silversmiths. The silver was collected and lent to the Museum through the efforts of the Society of Colonial Dames of the State of New York.

The frequent visitor who aims to have a systematic knowledge of the Museum collections deserves the utmost consider-

ation. Two special methods to facilitate such sightseeing, adopted more or less experimentally, have been continued as regular parts of the Museum program. The first was the publication of a Museum Bulletin started as a quarterly in November, 1905, but soon changed to a monthly record of Museum news. Its object has been to furnish a ready means of communication between the officers and staff of The Metropolitan Museum of Art on the one hand and the members and friends of the Museum on the other; in other words, it is a peripatetic "information bureau" which aims to impart knowledge simply and attractively and so to encourage visits to the Museum and make them more helpful. It contains a complete list of all accessions with sufficient indication where each may be found and a more or less extended description, generally with illustrations, of the more important objects, whether gifts or purchases. It announces any change in arrangement or rules. It gives full information on all subjects connected with the Museum. No longer is its usefulness a matter for question; its place is established. With a subscription list of about 550, exclusive of the membership, and a large sale at the catalogue desks, it is an agent by no means insignificant in spreading a knowledge of art.

The second device was the use of a special room to exhibit together the accessions of the month in all departments. Later they must be scattered in various parts of the building in order to secure a scientific arrangement. Their grouping for a month, however, aids the visitor who wishes to see the new collections quickly and easily. This plan, inaugurated in 1906, having been found to fill a need, has been kept up ever since. Objects that by their minuteness and value will find their permanent home in the Gold Room cannot be placed in the Room of Recent Accessions; objects that by their size require a great deal of space must of necessity be

placed elsewhere. With such exceptions new accessions have been so displayed.

One of the duties of the curators, as stated in the by-laws, is to "prepare guides and handbooks of the objects exhibited in their respective departments." This work has been taken up more seriously and systematically during the last few years than ever before, although even during the very early years of the Museum the Trustees recognized the educational value of catalogues and did their utmost to explain the collections committed to their care. With the systematic relabeling of the exhibits, however, there naturally followed the compiling of new catalogues for correctness and completeness of statement. By no means all of the collections are represented in the handbooks as yet published, but several other handbooks are in course of preparation. The ideal sought but not yet attained is such an array of published helps that any visitor who wishes to study any part of the collection shall find printed material at hand.

Of like purpose, to supply the public with facilities for a knowledge of the Museum collections, were the organization of the Photograph Department and the establishment of an Information Desk at the Fifth Avenue entrance. Previous to 1906 the supply of photographic prints obtainable at the Museum was limited to a comparatively small number printed by Pach Brothers. Since then the Museum has organized its own photographic department, in which all accessions to the Museum as received are systematically photographed for purposes of identification and cataloguing, and where photographs are made of all important objects in the Museum collections, ranging in size from the familiar postal card which sells for five cents to larger sizes suitable for framing. The number of negatives at present is over 25,000. Moreover, opportunity has been freely given to important publishers of art photographs, at home and

abroad, to photograph the pictures and other objects of art and to place their photographs on sale at the Museum. Every visitor to the Museum is now able to obtain not only the Museum's own photographs, but photographs published by Braun, Clément & Co. of Paris, Pach Brothers, the Detroit Publishing Company, the Elson Company, and others. The Information Desk is not only the salesroom for the photographs and catalogues, but also the reception room, as it were, at the very threshold of the Museum where a welcome is extended and help offered in answering the many and varied questions of visitors to the Museum.

Somewhat earlier than these innovations came certain changes in the rules for sketching and copying which granted increased privileges to the student of art. By the new regulations copying is permitted every day except Saturday, Sunday, and legal holidays, instead of only on the two pay days, as hitherto. Under the former rules or practice of the Museum, sketching or making notes of the objects of the collections had been absolutely forbidden and the collections had thereby lost much of their value to the earnest student or ambitious artisan. This policy was reversed and since 1905 permission has been freely granted to use in this way any exhibits except those objects which have been copyrighted and those which are lent. For these permission is granted upon presentation of the owner's consent in writing. Even the use of hand cameras is permitted on the same terms. For all kinds of copying requiring the use of an easel or modeling stand, permission must be obtained. In 1911 there were 1,103 permits issued. Copies may be made in any size required, a concession some museums do not grant. Thus the opportunity to copy has been extended just as far as is consistent with the preservation of order, the observance of copyright laws, and the just treatment of lenders.

The Museum Library, another educational agency in the Museum, entered upon a new epoch when by the conditions of the Rogers Bequest a part of the income from the Rogers Fund was to be expended for books for the Library. This bequest, therefore, not only afforded opportunity for the creation of an excellent library of art, but made this task

WING G
THE LIBRARY

almost imperative. Under such conditions it became wise to state clearly the scope and policy of the Library. The Library Committee in a report presented early in 1906 gave as its opinion, "The Museum Library should be a storehouse of information upon any subject illustrated by the Museum collections — irrespective of the fact that the same or similar books are to be found upon the shelves of other City Libraries — in order that the necessary sources of information may be

open and easy of access to the Directors and Curators of the Museum and also to all of its visitors who are students and not simply sightseers. . . . The acquisition of fine and rare books would appear to be within the province of a Library of Art. Monuments of early printing, illuminated manuscripts, and book bindings from the hands of renowned bibliopegists of former times are as much works of art . . . as paintings on canvas or sculptures in stone, and as full of the inspiration that flows only from original works of art."

The Library, which had been deposited at first in "a small, dark, damp room in the basement of the first building erected by the city for the Museum in Central Park," had been assigned in 1888 to a room on the second story of the South Wing, which was completed in that year. There it had shelf-room for ten thousand volumes and reading tables to accommodate perhaps a dozen readers. This became very much crowded as the collection of books increased and the Library overflowed into the adjoining Board Room. In 1910 the Library entered its third home, an annex on the south side of the building built especially for its accommodation and correspondingly commodious. Here a room was provided for the study collection of photographs, which in 1910 numbered upward of 28,000 and on January 1, 1912, had reached a total of 33,423, covering ancient and modern art, both fine and industrial.

At the very threshold of this period, in January, 1905, the Executive Committee adopted a resolution that marked a definite advance, as it was the first statement found in the minutes of the sympathetic attitude of the Museum toward the public school teachers and scholars. It reads:

"Whereas: The Trustees of The Metropolitan Museum of Art desire to extend the educational opportunities of the Museum so far as practicable to the teachers and scholars of the public schools of the City.

"Resolved: That the Board of Education be notified of the willingness of the Trustees to issue on application to any teacher in the public schools, under such regulations as the Board of Education may prescribe, a ticket entitling such teacher to free admittance to the Museum at all times when the Museum is open to the public, including pay days, either alone or accompanied by not more than six public school scholars for whose conduct such teacher will be willing to become responsible."

By this resolution the door to the Museum was thrown open to the teachers of the public schools; they had but to come and avail themselves of the hospitality of the Museum. The Board of Education through its President, Henry N. Tifft, sent notification of this action to all teachers in the public schools, with the result that 1,093 applications for teachers' tickets were received during 1905.

Two years later another forward step was taken when the place of Supervisor of Museum Instruction was created, and the Assistant Secretary, Henry W. Kent, was appointed to perform the duties of this new position. By his interest in this phase of Museum activity and his experience in similar work, he was exceptionally qualified to take the initiative in such endeavor. The object in view was active coöperation with the teachers, and furnishing practical help in making the Museum an important ally in the teaching of art, history, and literature as taken up in the curriculum of the public schools. The Annual Report of 1907 announced, "Special written information will be given at any time to teachers who will designate in advance the work which they wish to illustrate. A class room with seating capacity of about one hundred and fifty to two hundred and containing apparatus for stereopticon exhibition, has been set aside for the use of teachers with pupils and may be secured at any time during Museum hours, notice being

given in advance in order to prevent conflicting visits. When the visits of teachers or pupils fall on 'pay days,' provision is made for their admission without charge. Photographs and lantern slides from the collections of the Museum are sent to the class room when desired, and assistance in selecting those which will be of use in the ground to be covered by the teacher's lecture is gladly given. Direct intercourse between the Museum and the teachers is had from time to time, and lectures on special subjects are being given by members of the Museum staff. . . .

"The Museum holds itself ready at all times to confer with teachers and to assist as far as it may in their work, and it is hoped that in the future they will find it possible to take more advantage of the benefits which the institution can give than the demands of the school system have seemed to permit in the past."

In other words, by the appointment of a Supervisor of Museum Instruction and the equipping of a class-room for the use of teachers, the Museum had not merely extended a cordial invitation to teachers, but had made definite preparations for accommodating its guests. The teachers and scholars came in increasing numbers. In 1907 the number of teachers with classes attending the Museum was 2,224; in 1908, the number rose to 5,627.

Still further material to render the Museum useful to teachers and scholars has now been prepared. Since 1907 the Museum has been acquiring by gift or purchase a collection of lantern slides numbering 10,763, which is kept at the Information Desk. These are not confined to objects in the Museum, but have been chosen to illustrate the various subjects represented in the Museum collections. They are used both for lectures in the Museum and elsewhere; in fact, they are frequently sent a hundred miles or more from New York City. For use in free lectures, there is no fee; for

private purposes, a charge of one cent per slide is made with a minimum charge of fifty cents. This enables any teacher of art to illustrate his lectures without cost or with a nominal payment, according to the circumstances.

The third step was taken by the Museum in 1908 by the appointment of a Museum Instructor, whose whole time should be occupied with guiding classes and individuals to the objects they wished to see in connection with school work or for personal pleasure. This innovation was tried on the general principle that a person is a more inspiring guide than a book or a label. Not only had the Museum prepared a room; it had also secured a hostess to greet and entertain its guests. To quote again, "The pleasantest form of introduction to objects of art is undoubtedly the companionship of someone who knows them and who leads us to them and instils into us by words and behavior his familiarity and love for them. Visits to museums with such people are engraved on our memories and affect our whole future experience. Encouragement by the explanation of a simple point, the answering, maybe, of a trivial question, the direction of a tendency, the correction of an error, the interpretation of a meaning, a convention, a technical process, the unveiling of some evasive but significant beauty, the mere charm of intercourse with a well-informed man who has feeling, may fill moments of enthrallment." By the appointment of a Museum Instructor, the opportunity of seeing the Museum collections under expert guidance was open to everyone. Members, teachers, and pupils of the public schools receive this assistance free; all others pay a nominal charge of twenty-five cents per person, with a minimum of one dollar per hour. Over four thousand persons during 1911 were thus aided to appreciate the collections, of whom thirty-seven hundred were teachers and classes. This result is more encouraging because it is an evidence of real,

spontaneous interest, inasmuch as the Board of Education does not require art museum visiting as a part of the school curriculum, as is the case in the science museums.

The most recent development of the situation has been the appointment by the Superintendent of Education of Dr. James P. Haney, Supervisor of Art in the High Schools, to investigate the feasibility of coöperation with the Museum, following the lines of the Museum's approval in this matter during the last few years, and then to recommend a scheme to show the utility and effect of such coöperation from the point of view of the schools. That is, the school authorities have now taken official action looking toward the possibility of closer coöperation with the Museum in the future.

With the opening of the Lecture Room in the fall of 1911 an opportunity was given for a course of lectures specially designed to help the High School teachers to use the Museum collections with and for their pupils intelligently and successfully. Such a series of talks was conducted during the spring of 1912 as follows: Museums and Teachers of History, by President G. Stanley Hall, of Clark University; Museums and Teachers of Art, by Kenyon Cox; Museums and Teachers of English, by Professor Stockton Axson, of Princeton University; and Museums and Teachers of the Classics, by Professor Oliver S. Tonks, of Vassar College.

The goal toward which the Museum has been working in all these progressive steps, and toward which it will continue to work, is to secure a recognized place in the curriculum of the schools for visits to the Museum, that they may be planned for regularly in the assignment of time with the other studies. Then only will the work be on a permanent basis, no longer dependent on the enthusiasm of the teacher or the interest of the supervisor, but continuing by right and necessity, not by favor or option.

Of the unequal struggle between the capacity of the build-

ing and the growth of the collections, in which the Trustees have been engaged even from 1872, the last few years furnish the best illustration. The construction of a building is necessarily slow, while the increase in the exhibits has come by unexpected leaps and bounds. Although four extensions for public use, the so-called Wings E, F, G, and H, have been added during this last period, at no time has the Museum been

WING E
THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

able to exhibit all its collections. Such problems, however, are but the price of success, and incident to unusual development.

For all these new wings McKim, Mead, and White have been appointed architects. The first, adjoining the first Fifth Avenue Wing on the north, was authorized at a cost not exceeding $1,250,000 by a law passed March 23, 1904.[1] The others came under the provisions of a law passed June 17, 1907,[2] enabling the Department of Parks to appropriate a sum not exceeding $750,000 annually for not more than ten years for extensions and repairs.

[1] Charter, Constitution, By-laws, Lease, Laws, 1910, p. 60.
[2] Charter, Constitution, By-laws, Lease, Laws, 1910, p. 63.

The second story of Wing E was used for the first time in January, 1909, at the exhibition of contemporary German art and again utilized for the Hudson-Fulton Exhibition of the same year. The first story was devoted to the installation of the greatly enlarged Egyptian collection.

Long before the completion of this wing, however, a delightful necessity for still another wing had arisen, for J. Pierpont Morgan had generously offered to place in the Museum the entire Georges Hoentschel Collection of objects of French decorative art of the Gothic period and of the eighteenth century, the former as a loan, the latter as a gift. Georges Hoentschel, a distinguished architect of Paris, whose special branch is the restoration or construction of interiors of these two periods, gathered together for his own use and pleasure examples of untold value to the architect, the designer, and the craftsman. The receipt of his collection, unequaled by that of any other private collector, and in its eighteenth century section surely unmatched by any public museum, provided a large and valuable nucleus for a collection of European decorative arts and occasioned both the formation of a Department of Decorative Arts and the building of a Wing of Decorative Arts, technically called Wing F.

"This is the first part of our Museum building which has ever been planned with a definite knowledge of, and with a direct reference to, the collections it was to contain, and it is an object lesson of the incalculable advantage of having such knowledge in advance whenever circumstances make it possible."[1] Mr. McKim went to Paris, saw the Hoentschel Collection as it was installed in M. Hoentschel's private gallery, and studied the arrangement of the Musée des arts decoratifs of the Louvre, from which the mere suggestion of a plan was gained. The building, briefly described, consists of a large central hall, sixty-seven feet high, lighted by a

[1] E. R. in Supplement to Bulletin, March, 1910, p. 5.

clerestory and surrounded by two stories of smaller galleries lighted from one side only.

March 14, 1910, was the date of the opening of this wing. Not only were European decorative arts admirably repre-

MAIN HALL
THE WING OF DECORATIVE ARTS

sented, but American art as well made an exceptional showing through the welcome gift made by Mrs. Russell Sage of the whole of the Bolles Collection of American furniture and decorative arts. This important collection was gathered by H. Eugene Bolles, a Boston lawyer, during twenty-five years, at a time when the value of our native art was scarcely appre-

ciated at all and when consequently the collector had an exceptional opportunity, which Mr. Bolles utilized most intelligently and painstakingly. The collection includes the decorative arts from the time of the earliest settlements in New England to the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

By the side of such unusual gifts as those of Mr. Morgan and Mrs. Sage should stand the presentation in 1910 of the Murch Collection of Egyptian Antiquities by Miss Helen Miller Gould. This collection, brought together by the late Dr. Chauncey Murch during a twenty-years' residence in Luxor, Egypt, while he was directing the work of the American Presbyterian Mission, is rich in seal cylinders, scarabs, and amulets.

The collection of laces and textiles as it now exists may fitly be termed a product of recent years. In 1906 the laces numbered about seven hundred pieces, acquired principally through the purchase in 1879 of the MacCallum Collection, and the gift in 1888 of the laces of the late Mrs. John Jacob Astor by Mr. Astor pursuant to her wishes. These laces, beautiful in themselves, needed classification and arrangement to enhance their value, work which was successfully accomplished in the spring of 1906 under the direction of Frau Kubasek of Vienna, who had performed similar work on several large collections of Europe and America. The classification used was enlarged by Miss Margaret Taylor Johnston from one prepared by Miss Catherine A. Newbold for the Loan Collection of Laces at the World's Fair in Chicago. The enthusiastic interest and untiring industry of Miss Newbold, Miss Johnston, Mrs. Robert W. de Forest, and Miss Mary Parsons soon began to bear fruit in the gifts from many donors of rare examples of the lacemaker's art. So extensive have been the additions that the collection now numbers over three thousand pieces and easily bears comparison with any European collection. Three large collec-

tions of lace have been received in one way or another: the Nuttall Collection, which numbers nine hundred and eighty-four pieces and represents some thirty-two countries, was presented by Mrs. Magdalena Nuttall of Tunbridge Wells, England; the Blackborne Collection, gathered by Thomas Blackborne from about 1850, and augmented by his son Arthur Blackborne, a collection of international reputation, comprising over six hundred examples and including all periods of lace manufacture, was purchased for the Museum by sixty-two ladies and gentlemen; and the Seligman Collection, consisting of ninety-five pieces of rare seventeenth and eighteenth century lace, was bequeathed by Mrs. Henrietta Seligman.

The collection of textiles, which had been growing steadily, leaped in 1909 by a fortunate purchase to a comprehensiveness equal to that of the laces. This acquisition was the collection of the late Friedrich Fischbach of Wiesbaden, numbering nearly three thousand examples of European weaves and Coptic and Persian textiles, a collection which offers a rare opportunity for students of the arts and crafts. For their use a study-room of textiles has been equipped, and many of the interesting examples not on exhibition may there be examined.

The Department of Egyptian Art was organized in 1906 in recognition of the fact that the years of productiveness in Egyptian excavation were fast nearing an end and consequently the Museum must enter the field actively if it were to secure a satisfactory share of the rich yield of Egyptian antiquities. Private liberality enabled the Museum to take advantage of the opportunity. The Museum obtained from the Egyptian authorities concessions to excavate at three sites, "representing three important periods of Egyptian art, — the pyramid field of Lisht, about thirty miles south of Cairo, the Oasis of Kharga, situated in the Libyan Desert,

about one hundred miles west of the Nile, and the palace of Amenhotep III at Thebes." At no one of these sites have the excavations been completed, but so rich have been the finds so far, that in November, 1911, in the new Egyptian galleries, ten in number, there was installed a rarely interesting collection of antiquities made up of the earlier collection rearranged, the objects obtained by excavation, and the gifts and loans of interested friends. Excavations are still being carried on with gratifying results.

From Egypt before Christ to America in the twentieth century is, indeed, a long stride, but the authorities of an Art Museum, if they live up to their opportunities, must be as alert for a good representation of the art of the latter period as for that of the former. The endeavor to give American art an adequate showing in this Museum has been ably reënforced by the generosity of George A. Hearn, of whose "endowment, so to speak, of contemporary American painting" some appreciation should here be given. In money alone, his noteworthy munificence has now reached the large amount of $251,000, the income of which is to be used for the purchase of paintings by living Americans; in paintings his gifts number seventy-five, including some works of various European schools. Two galleries are entirely filled with pictures which he has presented, and a third contains a large number of paintings of which he was the donor, besides several that he has lent. Since 1906 twenty-six pictures have been purchased from the Hearn Funds. By so fortunate an arrangement the collection of American paintings has grown far beyond its possible increase without such abundant aid.

Friends of the Museum have not been wanting in these last years, as the preceding record shows. Further evidence of this fact is furnished by the generous legacies received, of which we can refer only to the most conspicuous, three in

number. Frederick C. Hewitt of Owego, New York, a man of singularly unpretentious life who would not so much as become an annual member of the Museum during his lifetime, at his death in August, 1908, made the Museum his residuary legatee as well as a specific legatee to the extent of $500,000. From his estate the Museum has received more than $1,500,000. Though not a New Yorker, and not per-

WING H
THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

sonally acquainted with the Trustees of the Museum, he reposed sufficient confidence in their integrity and good judgment to make this large gift to the Museum.

The second bequest, on the contrary, came from the Second Vice-President of the Museum, John Stewart Kennedy, who was but giving a continuity and permanence to long years of conscientious service for the Museum by bequeathing to it three sixty-fourths of his residuary estate, from which over $2,000,000 has already been realized. To understand the spirit of this princely giver, we may read the preface to his will, in which he states, "Having been greatly prospered in the business which I carried on for more than thirty years in this my adopted country and being desirous of leaving some expression of my sympathy with its

religious, charitable, benevolent, and educational institutions, I give and bequeath . . . the following legacies." In other words, his legacies, as well as his gifts during his lifetime, were prompted by a high sense of duty and a breadth of interest which included not only his adopted country, but his native Scotland and the Far East. Like Mr. Hewitt, he was singularly unostentatious; few knew the extent of his gifts while he lived, and to many his large bequests came as a surprise.

Darius Ogden Mills, another Trustee, bequeathed to the Museum the sum of $100,000, which has since been used as a memorial fund for the purchase of works of art.

With these legacies should be grouped a most unexpected and gratifying gift received on February 19, 1912, from Francis L. Leland. This consisted of twelve hundred shares of the New York County National Bank, of which Mr. Leland is President. These shares represent a well-invested fund of over a million dollars, and so the gift is by far the largest in money ever made to the Museum by a person during his lifetime.

It is but fitting that in these last pages we turn aside from the material prosperity, the hum of building operations, the stir of installing new treasures, the busy days of loan exhibitions, even the gratifying use of large gifts and legacies, to live again with some who have joined the great majority. Although in 1912 the records show a membership of 3,151 as against 3,056 in 1907, some loyal friends of the Museum are no longer numbered in the total. Nine Trustees have left places hard to fill, six of them having died within a single twelvemonth. Rutherfurd Stuyvesant, last but one of the Founders of the Museum, a direct descendant of Governor Peter Stuyvesant, had for nearly forty years retained the greatest interest in and strongest attachment to the Museum even

EDWARD ROBINSON
FROM THE PAINTING BY JOHN SINGER SARGENT

when his life abroad prevented his active participation in its councils. One of the first collectors of arms and armor in this country, he was able by his trained connoisseurship to further the interests of the Museum in obtaining excellent examples of the armorer's work; especially was he instrumental in the acquisition of the Ellis and Dino Collections. John Crosby Brown, the faithful Treasurer of the Museum, who was for fourteen consecutive years a Trustee, was a man of "large religious, educational, and philanthropic interest," an elder in the Madison Square Presbyterian Church, a trustee of Columbia University, and President of the Union Theological Seminary, one of those men "who sweeten and enrich the life of a city," who make "integrity beautiful and righteousness contagious." Charles Follen McKim, the architect, whose services to education and the public taste in such buildings as the Boston Public Library, the Library of Columbia University, and Mr. Morgan's Library, are a public heritage, left among his fellow-trustees a memory of personal charm. John Stewart Kennedy, a Vice-President of the Museum, to whose generous legacy reference has already been made, gave to the Museum over twenty years of active, forceful attention as a Trustee, and came into a place of warm, personal friendship with his comrades on the Board. William Mackay Laffan, editor, scholar, and lover of the beautiful, was so bountifully endowed by nature that the Museum is infinitely richer for his five years' trusteeship. Charles Stewart Smith had borne the burden and heat of the day for twenty years, in particular serving most efficiently on the Building Committee, safeguarding the interests both of the City and of the Museum, and promoting a helpful relationship between the two. Darius Ogden Mills was indeed an old and tried friend of the Museum, a Trustee for twenty-eight years and first vice-president for four years, whose bequest was but another expression of his vital inter-

est in all the varied activities of the Museum. His fellow-trustees, in a resolution that varies greatly from the stereotyped form, say of him: "His personal character was uniquely pure and noble, and he was a rare instance in America of a man of immense wealth and great enterprises constantly increasing his vast possessions upon whom no breath of malicious suspicion or criticism ever rested." John Bigelow belonged to the City and to the whole country as "our foremost citizen;" he belonged, also, to the Museum as a valued counsellor, though the infirmities of years had recently prevented his active participation in its affairs. "A great citizen of spotless character known of all men," he adorned every organization with which he was connected. Francis Davis Millet, the one artist in this list, had endeared himself greatly to his comrades on the Board of Trustees during the two decades that he had been a Fellow and especially during the two short years of his active service as a Trustee. By them his untimely death on the Titanic in the midst of a noble career was keenly felt as an irreparable loss, even as it was by all his friends, by his profession, which he so loyally represented, and by his country. Such is the roll of Nature's gentlemen whom the Museum has lost; such the places that must be filled by others.

Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke, also, whose appointment as Director was a satisfaction to those who knew his rare equipment for rendering a unique service to the Museum, was destined to perform the duties of his office less than five years. In the summer of 1909 he was granted a year's leave of absence to recuperate his failing health, but the rest proved in vain. On July 1, 1910, his resignation as Director was regretfully accepted, and he was proffered the position of Honorary European Correspondent, which he held until his death on March 29, 1911. The scholarship and connoisseurship of Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke were of a high order

and correspondingly valuable; his distinctive service, however, a service no one perhaps could have performed so well, was to bring "the citizens of New York to a realizing sense of their welcome to the Museum and their participation in its advantages."

On October 31, 1910, the Acting Director, Edward Robinson, upon whom had devolved the actual conduct of the affairs of the Museum during the illness of Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke, was made the third Director of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

OFFICERS
OF
THE MUSEUM

OFFICERS OF THE MUSEUM

PRESIDENTS

JOHN TAYLOR JOHNSTON	1870–1889
HONORARY PRESIDENT FOR LIFE	1889–1893[1]
HENRY GURDON MARQUAND	1889–1902[2]
FREDERICK W. RHINELANDER	1902–1904[3]
JOHN PIERPONT MORGAN	1904–

VICE-PRESIDENTS

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT	1870–1874[4]
ANDREW H. GREEN	1870–1874
WILLIAM H. RIGGS	1870–1874
WILLIAM H. ASPINWALL	1870–1874
GEN. JOHN A. DIX	1870–1874
HON. EDWIN D. MORGAN	1870–1874
ALEXANDER T. STEWART	1870–1874
HENRY G. STEBBINS	1870–1871
MARSHALL O. ROBERTS	1870–1871
SAMUEL FINLEY BREESE MORSE	1871–1872
DANIEL HUNTINGTON	1871–1874, 1876–1903
LUCIUS TUCKERMAN	1872–1874

[1]Deceased, March 24, 1893.
[2]Deceased, February 26, 1902.
[3]Deceased, September 25, 1904.
[4]From 1870–1874 there were nine vice-presidents.

VICE-PRESIDENTS — CONTINUED

WILLIAM COWPER PRIME	1874–1891[1]
WILLIAM TILDEN BLODGETT	1874–1875[2]
FREDERICK W. RHINELANDER	1892–1902
WILLIAM EARL DODGE	1902–1903[3]
JOHN PIERPONT MORGAN	1904–[4]
RUTHERFURD STUYVESANT	1905–1906[5]
JOHN STEWART KENNEDY	1905–1909[6]
DARIUS OGDEN MILLS	1906–1910[7]
ROBERT W. DE FOREST	1909–
JOSEPH H. CHOATE	1910–

SECRETARIES, CORRESPONDING [8]

RUSSELL STURGIS, JR.	1870–1873
WILLIAM J. HOPPIN	1873–1874

SECRETARIES, RECORDING

THEODORE WESTON	1870–1872
GEORGE PALMER PUTNAM	1872–[9]
RUSSELL STURGIS	1873–1874

[1]Resigned May 25, 1891. Action deferred.
[2]Deceased, November 4, 1875.
[3]Deceased, August 9, 1903.
[4]Became President November 21, 1904.
[5]Tendered resignation December, 1905. Laid on table.
[6]Deceased, October 31, 1909.
[7]Deceased, January 3, 1910.
[8]From 1870–1874 there were two secretaries, corresponding and recording.
[9]Deceased, December 29, 1872. Term filled out by Theodore Weston

OFFICERS OF THE MUSEUM

SECRETARIES

William J. Hoppin	1874–1877[1]
General Louis Palma di Cesnola	1877–1904[2]
Robert W. de Forest	1904–[3]

TREASURERS

Samuel G. Ward	1870–1871
Robert Gordon	1871–1872[4]
Frederick W. Rhinelander	1872–1882
Henry G. Marquand	1882–1889
Salem H. Wales	1889–1892
Hiram Hitchcock	1892–1900[5]
William L. Andrews	1901–1902[6]
Harris C. Fahnestock	1902–1905
John Crosby Brown	1905–1909[7]
Howard Mansfield	1909–

HONORARY LIBRARIAN

William Loring Andrews	1880–

STAFF OF THE MUSEUM

DIRECTORS

General Louis Palma di Cesnola	1879–1904[8]
Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke	1905–1910[9]
Edward Robinson	1910–

[1]Resignation accepted June 21, 1877. General Cesnola filled out term.
[2]Deceased, November 20, 1904.
[3]Elected November 21, 1904.
[4]Resignation accepted October 28, 1872.
[5]Deceased, December 30, 1900.
[6]Resignation took effect September 1, 1902.
[7]Deceased, June 25, 1909.
[8]Deceased, November 20, 1904.
[9]Deceased, March 29, 1911.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

EDWARD ROBINSON . . . 1905–1910

CURATORS

Department of Paintings
- WILLIAM HENRY GOODYEAR . 1886–1888
- GEORGE HENRY STORY. . . 1889–1906
- Curator Emeritus . . 1906–
- ROGER E. FRY 1906–1907
- BRYSON BURROUGHS . . . 1907 [1]–

Department of Sculpture
- ISAAC H. HALL . . . . . 1886–1896[2]
- WILLIAM R. ARNOLD . . . 1896–1898
- FRANK EDWIN ELWELL . . 1903–1905

Department of Casts
- JOHN ALSOP PAINE . . . 1889–1906

Department of Egyptian Art
- ALBERT MORTON LYTHGOE . 1906–

Department of Decorative Arts
- WILLIAM R. VALENTINER . . 1907–1912

Curator of Metalwork
- JOHN H. BUCK . . . 1906–1912

Curator of Arms and Armor
- BASHFORD DEAN . . . 1906–1912

Department of Arms and Armor
- BASHFORD DEAN . . . 1912–

[1]Acting Curator, 1907–1909; Curator, 1909–
[2]Deceased, July 2, 1896.

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